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DISCOURSES

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS AND OCCASIONS,

BY

ROBERT SOUTH, D. D.

SELECTED

FROM THE COMPLETE ENGLISH EDITION,

WITH

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

DR. SOUTH.

ROBERT SOUTH, one of the most distinguished divines of the English church for talents, eloquence, and learning, and who, especially, enjoys a proverbial celebrity for wit, was the son of William South, an eminent merchant in London. He was born at the neighbouring village of Hackney, in the year 1633, and early discovering an extraordinary genius for letters, was sent to Westminster school; entering there, as king's scholar, in 1647. Here, under the care of the famous Dr. Busby, he acquired an unusual measure of grammatical and philological learning; praise, which Anthony Wood, while he allows, materially qualifies, by adding, "but more of impudence and sauciness." On the year after his entrance, he made himself conspicuous by reading the Latin prayers on the day of King Charles's death, and praying for his Majesty by name. This expression of perilous loyalty, (for such it would appear evidently to have been,) he afterwards recollected with much complacency.* From Westminster, he was elected student of Christ church, Oxford, in 1651, "where, having the advantage of a handsome allowance from his mother, and the countenance of his relation, Dr. John South, of New college, Regius Professor of the Greek tongue, he made those advances in literature that gave him the admiration and esteem of the whole University, and drew upon him the eyes of the best masters of humanity and other studies."† Of his proficiency here, indeed, his sermons have

* See the Eighth Discourse, towards the close.

† Biog. Brit.

been justly called "a noble and lasting memorial." Of his classical attainments, one of the first fruits was an elegant Latin poem, addressed to Oliver Cromwell on the close of the Dutch war. In 1653, he wrote another Latin poem, much celebrated at the time, entitled, "*Musica Incantans: sive poema exprimens musicæ vires, juvenem in insaniam adigentis et musici inde periculum.*" The beauty of its diction was then so highly estimated as to occasion its separate publication, at the interval of several years after; but this, South himself is said to have regretted to the latest period of life, thinking of it only as a very juvenile production.

He commenced Master of Arts on the 12th of June, 1657, after performing all the preparatory exercises for it with the highest applause, in which his peculiar cast of wit and humour began to unfold itself.

This advancement, however, he did not obtain without some resistance from Dr. Owen, the Dean of his house, who, having found that he frequented the meetings of those royalists, among whom was Dr. John Fell, where divine service was performed according to the Liturgy of the Church of England, expostulated with him severely, and even threatened to expel him if he continued in that practice. South was not of a spirit likely to bear rebuke very meekly, however deserved. His reply, which was sufficiently ironical and tart, showed that he was quite ready to condemn, and even defy his principal, who at length plainly told him, *he was one that sat in the seat of the scornful*.* This rupture was said to have happened nearly at the very juncture of the Protector's death, when the Presbyterians getting the mastery of the Independents, the opportunity thus presented, was too tempting for South to resist, of casting in his lot with the ascendant party.

In 1658, he was ordained by one of the deprived bishops, according to the rites of the church of England; though so far as credit can be given to Wood, he had already preached for some time without orders; "always appearing the great champion for Calvinism against Arminianism and Socinianism." Being chosen to preach the Assize Sermon† at Oxford, in July, 1659, he endeared himself greatly to his new patrons, at the expense of the Independents, on whom his sarcastic talent was exerted to its full extent; and he received warm present encomiums, as the earnest of more substantial rewards, soon to follow. So rapid, however, was the succes-

* Wood.

† Twelfth Discourse of this Selection.

sion of public events, as not to permit the fulfilment of these hopes ; they were destined to be realized in a different, but more acceptable form.

The glimpses of his majesty's restoration, which began to appear at the close of the year 1659, could not escape the quicksightedness of South. For awhile, " he was something at a stand," as Wood thinks ; but as his powerful invective was soon aimed against all the sectarians, without distinction, he was not, probably, long perplexed as to the signs of the times. " But as it fell out," says his bigoted biographer, already quoted, " he missed his ends, (that is, the applause and its consequences, of the prelatical party,) for by his too much eagerness to trample upon the others, the graver sort of the said party would put their hats before their eyes, or turn aside, as being much ashamed at what the young man did utter." Zeal, however, does not often, under such circumstances, become offensive from its excess merely, and especially where the ability to serve is commensurate with the will. This was evinced in the sequel. South was chosen public orator of the University,* August 10, 1660, having preached, a month before, " a most excellent discourse"† before the king's commissioners. About the same time, according to Wood, " he tugged hard, such was his high conceit of his worth, to be canon of Christ church, as belonging to the preceding office, but was kept back by the endeavours of the dean." His competitors, for the most part, as he tells us, had been suffering by their steadfast loyalty, some of them being reduced " to a bit of bread ;" sacrifices, which South knew how to evade.

Whatever disappointment this might be to him, the " discontent and clamour," which it was said to have called forth, did not probably continue long. In 1661 he became domestic chaplain to Lord Clarendon, whose good graces he had secured by the complimen-

* Among the other duties, appertaining to this office, to which we have nothing similar in our literary institutions, it appears, from an incident related of South, was that of presentation for degrees. A distinguished military officer, who was to receive this honour, was ushered forward with much parade by him, while he repeated the words, *Presento tibi hunc virum bellicosissimum*.—At this point of the ceremony, the officer, as the story relates, averted his person, disconcerted, as was thought by some, at the very complimentary strain of the speaker. He, however, lost not his presence of mind, but proceeded with perfect readiness,—*Qui nunquam antea tergiversatus est*. See Nichols's Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth century.

† See the Fifth of this Selection.

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tary manner with which he discharged his official duty, at the investiture of his Lordship as Chancellor of the University. In March, 1663, he was installed prebendary of Westminster. A few months later, he was admitted to the degree of doctor in divinity; on the authority of the Oxford historian, not without much excitement. Similar objections to those urged upon a former occasion, we are told, were now renewed, confirmed by the additional circumstance of his comparative juniority, as a master of arts of but six years' standing. This last "made bachelors of divinity and masters of arts amazed at his claim;" but the letters of recommendation from his patron prevailed, though amid great confusion, if we are to credit all that is written.

While South continued in the service of Clarendon, an incident is related by Wood, which, as it rests on no other authority, has too questionable a title to appear in the text as a part of authentic biography. But for the ludicrousness of the relation itself, and as a specimen,—the last I shall give,—of this writer's extreme prejudice, it ought perhaps not to be lost; and may be seen below.* It

* "Clarendon, being much delighted with a sermon that he had preached before him, made way for him to preach the same again before his majesty; and having first passed the scrutiny of so great and famous a counsellor, every one's expectation was heightened, and happy was he or she among the greatest wits in town, that could accommodate their humour in getting convenient room in the chapel at *Whitehall*, to hang upon the lips of this so great an oracle. The day appointed being come for acting this scene over again, (April 13, 1662,) our author ascends the pulpit, and the eyes of all were immediately fastened upon him. After he had performed his obeisance to his majesty, he named his text. (Eccles. vii. 10.) *Say not then what is the cause &c.* Then after a witty preamble he proceeded to the division of the words. The prohibition in the text he laboured to enforce by an induction of particulars: first, the Pagan times were not better than these; then, the Popish times were not, &c. But the last insisted on, was the times of the late rebellion; and while he was endeavouring to evince that which was the main thing he intended to handle, it pleased God that he was suddenly taken with a qualm, drops of sweat standing in his face as big as peas, and immediately he lost the use of his speech, only uttering some few words to this effect, *Oh Lord! we are all in thy hands, be merciful unto us*; and then came down. The expectations of all being thus sadly disappointed, they were contented with the divertisement of an anthem, and so the service of that day ended. In the mean time, great care was taken of Mr. South, and by the use of cordials, and other means proper for one in that condition, he quickly recovered his spirits, and was every way as well again as before."—*History of Oxford*. vol. II. p. 1044.

need only be mentioned here, that the text given corresponds to that of the fifteenth discourse of this Selection, but that the parallel, recited by Wood, has, as the reader will perceive, wholly vanished.*

Upon the retirement of Clarendon into France in 1667, Dr. South became chaplain to James, duke of York. In 1670, he was made canon of Christ church, Oxford. In 1676, he attended, as chaplain, Lawrence Hyde, Esq., ambassador to the king of Poland, of which he gave an account in a letter to Dr. Edward Pocock, then Regius Professor of Hebrew, with whom he held a most intimate friendship, and which is preserved in the volume of his posthumous writings.

On Dr. South's return to England, he was presented to the rectory of Islip in Oxfordshire; and during the remainder of Charles's reign, he continued a strenuous asserter of the royal prerogative. About this period he is said to have refused more than one offer of a bishopric, as likewise that of an Irish archbishopric, made him in the reign of James, by his patron, Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester, who had been appointed lord-lieutenant of that kingdom. This is supposed by Tooke to have been mere rumour; and that, "violent, domineering, and intractable as was South's temper," it is more than probable, that his patrons might think it inexpedient, to put into his power by such an elevation, "more power than he was likely to use with discretion." An anecdote which is related of him at this period of his life, he considers as giving weight to such an opinion. The earl of Rochester, being solicited by his brother-in-law, James II. to renounce his religion, consented to abide the result of a conference between two divines of each party. The champions of Protestantism, being nominated by himself of course, were Dr. Jane and Dr. South; the latter of whom was objected to by his majesty, on the ground, "that instead of arguments, he would bring railing accusations, and had not temper of mind enough to go through a dispute that required the greatest calmness and attention." Dr. Patrick, then dean of Peterborough, was chosen in his place, who yet sought the assistance of Dr. South at a consultation the night before the conference was to commence.

* Of the deep-rooted antipathy of Wood to the author of these sermons, by which Tooke appears to have been too much biassed, an explanation, plausible enough, is given by Warton, as quoted in Malone's "Historical View of the English Stage."

The arguments drawn up by him were so irrefragable, as secured a decisive triumph to the cause he was not allowed openly to sustain ; and that too, to the satisfaction of the king himself, who dismissed his own champions with the rebuke, " that he could say more in behalf of his religion than they could ; and that he never heard a good cause managed so ill, nor a bad one so well."*

During the reign of this gloomy and bigotted prince, Dr. South remained inactive, " prayers and tears being the only means which his political principles would allow him to use," for averting the impending evil. He would neither join in the invitation to the Prince of Orange to come over to the rescue of the nation ; nor, after his arrival, subscribe to the association for his support, which was signed by the vice-chancellor and several heads of colleges in Oxford. When the new government, however, was firmly established, he took the oath of allegiance to it, without scruple. His political principles and conduct, however, did not, at least in this case, change with the times. He was still a determined enemy to toleration of all sorts ; and the scheme for a comprehension of the dissenters within the church establishment, which was started soon after King William's accession, and which Tillotson and Burnet had so much at heart, gave no less disquiet to him. Of this he disburthened his mind, in some degree probably, in the discourse from which some fragments are given in this volume, making the seventh of the " Selections."

The year 1693 is a memorable point in the life of Dr. South. Dr. William Sherlock, the father of the celebrated bishop, having published a " Vindication of the Trinity," by which, in his view, that leading doctrine of his church was rendered wholly *indefensible*, he could not resist the temptation to reply : which he did, to use the language of Burnet, " with an abundance of learning and orthodox zeal, but without any measure of christian charity, or any regards to the dignity of the subject or the decencies of his profession." His " Animadversions" are dedicated " to his adversary's admirers, and to himself, the chief of them." For the information of some readers, it may here be observed of this dispute, that Sherlock's distinction of persons in the Godhead has been commonly thought to run into tritheism ; while his adversary, with whom this triple division is resolved into mere modes of subsistence or

* English Editors of Bayle's Dictionary.

operation, as evidently verged to the heresy of Sabellius. This dispute, "long, loud, and furious," gradually enlisted, in its progress, most of the theologians of the kingdom, on one side or the other. What must have been a matter of peculiar triumph to South, the hostile opinion having been maintained by Mr. Bingham of University college, in a public sermon, was censured there in convocation, as "false, impious, heretical, and contrary to the doctrine of the church of England." The difference was rather inflamed than healed, however, by the decree; till the king was at last obliged to interpose his authority, forbidding the clergy to preach on the controverted question. Both parties engaged in it were soon after ridiculed in a well known ballad, entitled "The Battle Royal," which may be seen at length in Burnet's (Geo.) "Specimens of English Prose Writers." Some extracts from Dr. South's principal piece in this discussion are subjoined at the close of the volume; since they were thought to contribute not a little to the full-length portrait of this singular man. It is well also, that large class of readers, who have such a morbid horror of all controversy, should know something of its spirit in other days; that in question being, in this respect, by no means singular. They may learn to look upon the courteous warfare, of which the instances surely are not rare within our own observation or memory, as no very intolerable evil. If the reader of the extracts above-mentioned, is inclined to sympathize with the object of such a shower of virulent sarcasm, he may be apprized, that if it was not equally sustained on the part of Sherlock, it can hardly be ascribed to his superior mildness and forbearance. In other words, in a contest like this, his adversary was in his element; and might have felt sure of triumph over most opponents of his time.

During the greater part of Queen Anne's reign, Dr. South remained in a state of inaction; and the infirmities of old age grew fast upon him. Yet none were more alive to any alarm which concerned the church. He caught the ferment in which the public mind was long kept by Sacheverill, "that ignorant, impudent incendiary," as he was contemptuously styled by the Duchess of Marlborough; and strenuously exerted himself to procure for him a lenient sentence from his judges. When his political friends came into power towards the close of that reign, he was "solicited and courted" to accept of some higher dignities in the church,

and particularly to succeed Dr. Sprat as bishop of Rochester and dean of Westminster, in 1713; but he replied, that such a chair "would be too uneasy for an old, infirm man to sit in." The death of the queen was regarded by him as an indication of the approach of his own; as he told one of his most familiar friends and visitors, "that it was time for him to prepare for his journey to a blessed immortality; since all that was good and gracious, and the very breath of his nostrils, had taken its departure to the regions of bliss." One of the last acts of his life demonstrated the constancy of his attachments. The duke of Ormond had, by a bill of attainder in parliament, forfeited his title, and with it his place of high-steward of Westminster. Dr. South felt much regard for this family; and the earl of Arran, only brother of the late duke, being one of the two candidates to succeed him, he caused himself, though in a manner bed-ridden, to be brought in a chair to the new election. He made the voice of the prebendaries equal, by saying very briskly, when asked for whom he would vote, "Heart and hand for my Lord Arran." The choice was determined in his lordship's favour by the dean, who had the casting vote. This was the last time he went abroad; and exhausted, no doubt, by the interest he had shown, he made quick advances towards his dissolution; closing a long and laborious life, 8th of July, 1716.

He was buried, with many attendant circumstances of pomp and respect, in Westminster Abbey, near the tomb of Busby. The funeral service, at his own request, was read by Atterbury, for whom he had a great regard, and on whom the dignities had been conferred which himself had declined. His eulogy is contained in the Latin epitaph written by Dr. Friend, then head-master of Westminster school, and inscribed on the sumptuous marble monument erected to his memory. This, which will be regarded by most as sufficiently complimentary, but which surely is less disproportioned to its subject than many, describes him "as uniting at once all those extraordinary talents that were divided among the greatest masters of antiquity; the sound, distinct, comprehensive knowledge of *Aristotle*, with all the beautiful lights, graces, and embellishments of *Cicero*. One knows not which most to admire in his writings, the strength of reason, force of style, or brightness of imagination." And further, "that while he was possessed of *Tertullian's* oratory and force of persuasion, he was clothed with *St. Cyprian's* devotion

and humility." It is not easy to suppress a smile at the last grace with which the writer has endowed him; but in which he manifests, at least, the warmth and partiality of his friendship.

The praise, however liberal, which, in strict justice, is due to the intellect and the writings of South, will indeed very possibly be thought by some, outweighed by the faults of his character. He has laid this open, without disguise, in his sermons; and the picture, which some of his biographers have drawn of it, is little else than one of unmingled shade. The epithets of "sour," "morose," "peevish," "unamiable," "intolerant," and "unforgiving," make up most of the delineation of Rees and Tooke; while that of Antony Wood is written in gall. This estimate, unreasonably severe, will be softened, as it ought, by reference to other sources. South's was, what is called, a strongly marked character; and none who came often in contact with him, could view such a man with indifference. His prejudices, extreme in all points, acting upon an ardent, ingenuous, and frequently indiscreet temper, would naturally create enemies enough to blacken his name and memory; while, in the same cast of mind, as often is seen in other instances, many of his best qualities had their rise. Of his generous friendship, one or two examples have appeared in the sketch of his life; his charities to the poor were said to have been both liberal and secret; while for his curates he made as large provision as is often shown towards that unfortunate portion of the church. But having no anxiety to magnify his personal character, it is readily allowed, that these laudable traits might consist with the constitutional want of any very winning qualities; and, according to a generally admitted maxim, he was too witty a man to be much loved.

The reproach of being a time-server, is that which is most frequently cast upon his memory; by some, no doubt, who have heard nothing of his history beside. The versatility of his early life speaks too plausibly indeed to this charge. Nor is it meant to palliate it in saying, that the consciousness of such powers, fed by the most lavish encomiums, must at that season of life have worked strongly on an ambition, not naturally very torpid; till it was quite carried away by the prospects of distinction, which those times of confusion encouraged. These circumstances of his life too, it must not be forgotten, belong to a period which did not, either within the church or among his seniors, superabound in examples of inflexible prin-

ciple. Dr. South lived long enough to see the political faith which he cherished, again subverted; yet he did not dishonour his mature judgment by deserting it. This, it rests with those who impeach his integrity, to explain. If his steadfastness at the revolution of 1688 be weighed in the balance with his youthful levity during the interregnum, he will not perhaps be found wanting.

His adulation towards those who held the high places of church and state, it must be frankly owned, is inexcusably gross, in an age when adulation made near approaches to idolatry. Here, if he yields to any one the first place, it can only be to the dedications of Dryden. While lavishing his panegyric on the memory of the first, or the person of the second Charles, he seems to labour with the greatness of his theme; nor did the profligate character of the latter, for aught that appears, create any conscientious scruples to check the freedom of his pen. But devoted as he was to royalty, in whomsoever it might chance to reside; it is grateful to see that he was not wholly blind to the gross licentiousness of his times. As evidence of this, it is enough to refer to the last paragraphs of the tenth discourse of this Selection. This discourse, of which the general spirit is more bitter, perhaps, than that of any other from his pen, at once passes at its close into a strain of melancholy reflection, such as the moral aspect of society prompted, the more impressive and striking from the contrast. Another paragraph of the same tenor is found in one of his posthumous discourses, from which nothing has been taken in the body of this volume; and rather than lose a passage at once so eloquent, and so redeeming to the character of the subject of this notice, it is subjoined below.*

*“God neither dried up the sea, to bring the *Israelites* into a land flowing with milk and honey, that they might debauch, revel, and surfeit upon that mercy; nor did he, by a miracle as great, reinstate a company of poor, distressed exiles in the possession of their native country, that they should live at that rate of vanity and superfluity, that the world now-a-days cries out upon them for. God did not work wonders, to clothe and feed a few worthless parasites with the riches of a kingdom, to fill their cups with the blood of orphans, and the tears of widows. God did not intend that so universal a blessing, big enough for us all, should be diverted under-ground into the obscure, narrow channel of a few private purses; leaving so many poyal, suffering, undone persons, to sigh and mourn over their destitute condition, in the day of a public joy. God did not restore us to scoff at religion, and to malign his church, as if the nation and the government might stand

It is certainly much to the honour of South, that he has borne this decided testimony,—in language not less explicit, so far as my knowledge extends, than any contemporary preacher, certainly any court chaplain,—to the prevailing licentiousness of manners. Still, one could have wished that he had not been so strangely blind to its true source; or, to come perhaps nearer the truth, that he had been less fearful of even hinting at it, however indirectly. But of the character of his royal master, South was not tender only: he might, from some parts of this volume, be thought almost enamoured of it; and he who should first become acquainted with Charles through these sermons, might well need a guide to recognise him again in history. We cannot therefore, in this particular, render the same tribute to South as to Evelyn; one, whose loyalty was no way inferior to his own.

The intolerant spirit, which was continually venting itself in such asperity of language, as shocks the gentleness and refinement of modern times, is no slight blemish in the character of South. Of this temper, it is mortifying to say, that there are few sermons that do not afford more or less evidence. It breaks forth when the Socinians or Papists, but much oftener, when the Puritans are his theme; and though it takes sometimes the form of sportive humour and wit, yet more frequently still, that of bitter and envenomed satire. "His humour indeed, in too many instances, borders on grossness and indelicacy, and his wit betrayed him into expressions certainly improper, if not profane." Both the above faults, the violation of good temper and the offence against decorum in language, have sometimes occasioned concern and hesitancy in the editor of this volume. But to omit such passages has not always been easy without injury to the sermon, and in his view any attempt to soften them, would be an unwarrantable liberty. They have therefore been suffered to pass, in the hope, so far as they admit of apology, that the reader would remember when they were written; an allowance, which South needs much more for the temper of his productions, than for their style and taste.

It is one of the least favourable circumstances in the character of this remarkable man, that there seemed to be so little cordial

well enough without a church, but not without plays. No; surely, this was not the intent of this miraculous deliverance, whatsoever has been made the event of it."

regard between him and his eminent contemporaries. The sarcasms in one of the last discourses in this volume (seventeenth of the "Selections," p. 438.) are very obviously levelled at Jeremy Taylor; on which an English journal has pronounced so accurate a judgment, that its language may be adopted without variation. "The criticism of this passage is perfectly sound; and is a just exposure of Taylor's defects; but it is neither a fair nor an honourable representation of his general manner. It is not character, but caricature; the expressions themselves are singled out in malice, without any regard to the redeeming beauties of Taylor's language and conception. There can be no question that these fantastic phrases and 'starched similitudes' were really offensive to the sound taste and finer ear of South; but we are persuaded that the real *gravamen* was to be found in the greater reputation of his illustrious rival."* What rendered this reflection the more unkind, is, that after being kept back during the life of Taylor, it was spoken on the very year succeeding his decease. Nor does he appear to have been on a more friendly footing with Tillotson. The liberal encomium which the latter bestowed on the Socinians of his time, in his sermons "on the Divinity of our Blessed Lord," was wholly unpalatable to South, and he has given vent to his spleen on this account, probably, in one discourse, (third of the "Selections,") and still more undisguisedly in the close of his "Animadversions on Sherlock's Vindication." It has been said, that he was curious to know the archbishop's opinion of the execution of his part of that controversy, and the rather, on account of this oblique thrust at himself. This he contrived to obtain through a common friend, to whom his Grace said, *that the Doctor wrote like a man, but bit like a dog*; to which the repartee of South was, *that he had rather bite like a dog than fawn like one*; and the archbishop rejoined, *that for his own part, he should choose to be a spaniel rather than a cur.*†

* Eclectic Rev. for Feb. 1818.

† This keen encounter of wits rests wholly on the authority of Birch, who, in his Life of Tillotson, produces it in order to show that his hero was not deficient in this particular faculty. He bears little good will to South, whom he represents "as among Protestants, one of the most forward and petulant assailants of his Grace's writings; whose learning and genius were accompanied with an unrestrained acrimony of temper, and a boundless severity of language, mixed with the lowest and falsest, as well as truest wit, both in his conversations and writings."

He has also thrown out a challenge to Stillingfleet; who published another "Vindication of the Trinity," not far from the close of the century, and had therein severely censured "broils and opprobrious language among the learned." South considered this as especially meant for himself, and could not refrain from directing the shafts of his wit, both at his old antagonist and his champion together.*

Of the inuendo mode of attack, to which South was so much addicted, it is not out of place to say, that if Jortin be correct, it was not disdained by Tillotson, as may be seen in the extract from one of his sermons, subjoined below.†

With many of the learned of his time, and very consistently indeed with his general dislike to innovation of all kinds, South cherished strong prejudices against the Royal Society. That illustrious body, it is well known, did not begin its career under the happiest auspices. Charles II. dined with the members on the day of its creation, and then made it the whetstone of his wit; as appears in the familiar anecdote preserved by D'Israeli. Some individuals also among them exercised their acuteness in very petty, or very visionary pursuits and questions; and South had probably the first of these in view, in that sneering remark on the new sages, "*Mirantur nihil nisi pulices, pediculos et seipsos.*"

But while the personal defects of the man, so far as they enter into his sermons, detract from their praise; they may bear large deductions on this score, and yet enough will remain to place them in the highest order of this class of compositions. "No age or

* Preface to the third volume of his sermons.

† "We must be serious in our instructions—to which nothing can be more contrary than to trifle with the word of God, and to speak of the weightiest matters in the world, the great and everlasting concerns of the souls of men, in so slight and indecent a manner, as is not only beneath the gravity of the pulpit, but even of a well-regulated stage. Can any thing be more unsuitable, than to hear a minister of God from this solemn place break jests upon sin, and to quibble with the vices of the age? This is to shoot without a bullet, as if we had no mind to do execution, but only to make men smile at the mention of their faults: this is so nauseous a folly, and of so pernicious consequence to religion, that hardly any thing too severe can be said of it."

"This was undoubtedly designed as a censure upon South, for saying, that *there is no fluxing a soul out of its immortality*, and a hundred things of the same kind."—Jortin's *Miscellaneous Tracts*, Vol. I.

Tillotson may, therefore, not unfitly be considered, in this passage, as requiting on South, his castigation of Taylor.

country," it was well said, "can boast of greater names than then (reign of Charles II.) adorned the English church; it suffices to name Barrow, and Taylor, and South, the most eloquent, the most cogent, the most powerful of our divines."* His relative place in this distinguished triumvirate has been, in my judgment, most truly assigned by another critical work, at once of the highest respectability, and of all journals the most unlikely to cherish any prepossessions in his favour. "As a preacher, we do not hesitate to express our opinion, that with the obvious deductions arising from the defects already adverted to," (similar to what I have already noticed,) "South is second to none who have adorned the English pulpit. He has neither the intellectual fertility of Barrow, nor the richness of Taylor; but he has more feeling than the first, and more discretion and compactness than the last. Excepting in his propensity to jesting and abuse, his taste was exquisite; and in his happier compositions, the structure and cadence of his periods is equal to any thing of which the English language can boast."† That I may not encumber the page with tributes, like these, to many readers, it is hoped, unnecessary, let me only borrow from one source further. "As a good judge of men and manners, and a careful observer of human life, South deserves the highest praise. His sermons contain innumerable thoughts which are true and striking, though not always the most obvious to a common thinker; and this is an unequivocal mark of a good writer. It may perhaps be objected to some of them, that they contain too many divisions and subdivisions, and that order leads to confusion; but all the heads of his discourse are fully examined and discussed; and the infinite variety and fulness of the man's understanding and imagination led him often to crowd into one short sermon what a modern book-maker would have diffused over a folio. * * * * * Satire, invective, and ridicule, he poured forth in a copious and continuous stream; but he was often carried away by the violence of the torrent, which he could neither direct nor restrain. Words were the only weapons his profession allowed him to use, but he wielded

* Lond. Quarterly Rev. No. 57. Again, No. 69. "They who had been trained in the old ways of sound and orthodox learning,—like Clarendon, and Barrow, and South,—preserved for us a style of English undefiled, not less excellent in manner than in argument."

† Eclectic Rev. for Feb. 1818.

them with a terrible vigour and effect.* * * * * To be properly appreciated, his sermons ought to be carefully studied; and we may venture to say, that the labour will not be unprofitable; they have the unequivocal stamp, which a peculiar turn of mind and a great genius cannot fail to impress."†

The measure of praise, here collected, is too large and liberal to be capable of increase; yet there are points of excellence in these volumes which might be brought more distinctly to view. It is a characteristic of South's sermons, beyond those of any other preacher, Latimer not excepted, that they reflect the very image of the times; and its manners, opinions, and feelings, are brought as vividly before us, as in reading the histories of Clarendon and Burnet. There is, further, next to nothing of quaintness or antiquity about their style and language; which are much less removed, it is safe to say, from the taste of the present age, than from that which prevailed in his own. This volume, in fine, will satisfy all readers, it is believed, that there could be no greater mistake, than to suppose that wit was South's chief or only excellence as a writer. But as this was not, even in his day, a very common quality in sermons, nor his own, a common measure of that faculty; it is not, perhaps, strange, whatever were his other endowments, that this should have given him a distinctive mark, by which his name has been transmitted. Hence, the longer he has been known by common fame, rather than by nearer acquaintance, (a period which may be remotely dated,) the more general, of course, has the error become.

It remains to speak of the editorial execution of this volume. The selection, in both parts of it, has been solely guided by the principle of regard to what were thought the most characteristic, or the most able discourses. The admission of entire sermons only, would, with the present limits of the volume, have excluded several of the select portions, too remarkable to be lost. Those passages which, in some discourses of the first part, have been omitted, as the asterisks denote, are generally short, and very slightly connected with the main discourse. The excluded portions of any greater length, are

* The writer adds, "Doubtless he would have fought with the same spirit that he wrote; for during Monmouth's rebellion, he declared he was ready, if there should be occasion, to change his black gown for a buff coat."—See Biog. Brit.

† Retrospective Rev. Vol. IX.

mostly specimens of that scholastic metaphysics so much in vogue in his day, and for which his partiality was so great.* No change of the writer's phraseology, even in the most exceptionable instances, has been thought of or made, as already stated. The only further discretionary power exercised, has been in the occasional suppression of pleonasms, in which South abounds, so far as was requisite to bring these discourses, sometimes greatly extended by digressive speculations, within any tolerable limits.

Dr. South gave successively to the public, six volumes of his sermons during his life ; five others, much inferior in interest, and in their general character, afterwards appeared. The sixth complete edition was published in 1744 ; nor is any subsequent to that date known to me. It is certainly remarkable, that while two distinct volumes of his contemporary Barrow, after the present plan, have issued from the Clarendon press within this century ; the same office has not till now been performed for South. What renders the solution of this the more difficult is, that by the manner in which he is to this day referred to and quoted, on questions of doctrine, in the principal journal of the English church, his name would seem to have lost little of its weight and influence with the lapse of years. The local topics of many of these sermons, can explain this neglect, only in part ; for this circumstance has its share also in giving them something of their interest and value. As little can it be thought chargeable, in any great measure at least, on the unamiable features which his pages too often present. In that case surely, the author would have most rigorously expiated the faults of the man. Various causes, probably, have conspired to remove these sermons so far from the public notice ; and it affords some complacency to the editor, as well as some recompense to his labour, to have been in any degree the means of their revival.

J. P. D.

Cambridge, April 26, 1827.

*“ Between Dr. South's extravagant and most ungovernable wit, and his hatred for Puritans and Socinians, added to the still lingering scholastic orthodoxy, the armour he always buckles on for conflict, he must be allowed to exhibit a most grotesque appearance ; semi-Calvinist and semi-Arminian, semi-boxer and semi-buffoon, but always eloquent, profound, moral, and bold for God and for truth.”—Chr. Observer for 1823.

DISCOURSES.

DISCOURSE I.*

THE CREATION OF MAN IN GOD'S IMAGE.

GENESIS i. 27.

So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him.

How hard it is for natural reason to discover a creation before revealed, or being revealed, to believe it, the strange opinions of the old philosophers and the infidelity of modern atheists, is too sad a demonstration. To run the world back to its first original and infancy, and, as it were, to view nature in its cradle, and trace the out-goings of the Ancient of Days, in the first instance and specimen of his creative power, is a research too great for any mortal inquiry; and we might continue our scrutiny to the end of the world, before natural reason would be able to find out when it began.

[* "This," says the Eclectic Review, "is one of the purest of South's productions; and he has here traced the character of man in his first estate,—in his understanding—will—affections—with so admirable a skill, with discrimination so exquisite, and in language so rich, yet so beautifully simple, as to excite the highest admiration of the author's powers, and the deepest regret at their frequent misapplication."—The Epistle Dedicatory contains a very singular notice: "The ensuing discourse (lest I chance to be traduced for a plagiarist by him who has played the thief), I think fit to tell the world by the way, was one of those that by a worthy hand were stolen from me in the King's Chapel, and are still detained."—EDITOR.]

Epicurus's discourse concerning the original of the world is so fabulous and ridiculously merry, that we may well judge the design of his philosophy to have been pleasure, and not instruction.

Aristotle held, that it streamed by connatural result and emanation from God, the infinite and eternal Mind, as the light issues from the sun ; so that there was no instant of duration assignable of God's eternal existence, in which the world did not also co-exist.

Others held a fortuitous concourse of atoms ; but all seem jointly to explode a creation ; still beating upon this ground, that *the producing something out of nothing* is impossible and incomprehensible ; incomprehensible indeed, I grant, but not therefore impossible. There is not the least transaction of sense and motion in the whole man, but philosophers are at a loss to comprehend, I am sure they are to explain it. Wherefore it is not always rational to measure the truth of an assertion by the standard of our apprehension.

But to bring things even to the bare perceptions of reason, I appeal to any one, who shall impartially reflect upon the ideas and conceptions of his own mind, whether he doth not find it as easy and suitable to his natural notions, to conceive that an infinite, almighty Power might produce a thing out of *nothing*, and make that to exist *de novo*, which did not exist before, as to conceive the world to have had no beginning, but to have existed from eternity ; which, were it so proper for this place and exercise, I could easily demonstrate to be attended with no small train of absurdities. But then, besides that the acknowledging of a creation is safe, and the denial of it dangerous and irreligious, and yet not more, perhaps much less, demonstrable, than the affirmative ; so, over and above, it gives me this advantage, that, let it seem never so strange, uncouth, and incomprehensible, the nonplus of my reason will yield a fairer opportunity to my faith.

In this chapter, we have God surveying the works of the creation, and leaving this general impress or character upon them, *that they were exceeding good*. What an Omnipotence wrought, we have an Omniscience to approve. But as it is reasonable to imagine that there is more of design, and consequently more of perfection, in the last work, we have God here giving his last stroke, and summing up all into man, the whole into a part, the universe into an individual; so that, whereas in other creatures we have but the trace of his footsteps, in man we have the draught of his hand. In him were united all the scattered perfections of the creature, all the graces and ornaments; all the airs and features of being were abridged into this small, yet full system of nature and divinity; as we might well imagine that the great Artificer would be more than ordinarily exact in drawing his own picture.

The work that I shall undertake from these words, shall be to show what this image of God in man is, and wherein it doth consist; which I shall do these two ways: 1. Negatively, by showing wherein it *doth not* consist; 2. Positively, by showing wherein it *does*.

For the first of these, we are to remove the erroneous opinion of the *Socinians*. They deny that the image of God consisted in any habitual perfections that adorned the soul of *Adam*; but as to his understanding bring him in void of all notion, a rude unwritten blank; making him to be created as much an infant as others are born; sent into the world only to read and to spell out a God in the works of creation, to learn by degrees, till at length his understanding grew up to the stature of his body; also without any inherent habits of virtue in his will; thus divesting him of all, and stripping him to his bare essence; so that all the perfection they allowed his understanding was aptness and docility; and all that they attributed to his will was a possibility to be virtuous.

But wherein then, according to their opinion, did this image of God consist? Why, in that power and dominion that God gave *Adam* over the creatures; in that he was vouched his immediate deputy upon earth, the viceroy of the creation, and lord-lieutenant of the world. But that this power and dominion is not *adequately* and *formally* the image of God, but only a part of it, is clear from hence; because then he that had most of this, would have most of God's image; and consequently *Nimrod* had more of it than *Noah*, *Saul* than *Samuel*, the persecutors than the martyrs, and *Cæsar* than Christ himself, which to assert is a blasphemous paradox. And if the image of God is only grandeur, power, and sovereignty, certainly we have been hitherto much mistaken in our duty, and hereafter are by all means to beware of making ourselves unlike God, by too much self-denial and humility. I am not ignorant that some may distinguish between *ἐξουσία* and *δύναμις*, between a *lawful authority* and *actual power*, and affirm, that God's image consists only in the former, which wicked princes, such as *Saul* and *Nimrod*, have not, though they possess the latter. But to this I answer,

1. That the Scripture neither makes nor owns such a distinction; nor any where asserts, that when princes begin to be wicked, they cease of right to be governors. Add to this, that when God renewed this charter of man's sovereignty over the creatures to *Noah* and his family, we find no exception at all, but that *Cham* stood as fully invested with this right as any of his brethren.

2. But secondly; this savours of something ranker than Socinianism, even the tenets of the fifth monarchy, and of sovereignty founded only upon saintship; and therefore fitter to be answered by the judge, than by the divine; and to receive its confutation at the bar of justice, than from the pulpit.

Having now made our way through this false opin-

ion, we are in the next place to lay down *positively* what this image of God in man is. It is, in short, *that universal rectitude of all the faculties of the soul, by which they stand apt and disposed to their respective offices and operations*; which will be more fully set forth, by taking a distinct survey of it, in the several faculties belonging to the soul.

I. In the understanding.

II. In the will.

III. In the passions or affections.

I. And first for its noblest faculty, the understanding. It was then sublime, clear, and aspiring, and, as it were, the soul's upper region, lofty and serene, free from the vapours and disturbances of the inferior affections. It was the leading, controlling faculty; all the passions wore the colours of reason; it was not consul, but dictator. Discourse was then almost as quick as intuition; it was nimble in proposing, firm in concluding; it could sooner determine than now it can dispute. Like the sun, it had both light and agility; it knew no rest, but in motion; no quiet, but in activity. It did not so properly apprehend, as irradiate the object; not so much find, as make things intelligible. It did arbitrate upon the several reports of sense, and all the varieties of imagination; not like a drowsy judge, only hearing, but also directing their verdict. In sum, it was vigorous, quick, and lively; open as the day, untainted as the morning, full of the innocence and spriteliness of youth; it gave the soul a bright and a full view into all things; and was not only a window, but itself the prospect. Briefly, there is as much difference between the clear representations of the understanding then, and the obscure discoveries that it makes now, as there is between the prospect of a casement, and of a key-hole.

Now, as there are two great functions of the soul, *contemplation* and *practice*, according to that general

division of objects, some of which only entertain our speculation, others also employ our actions; so the understanding with relation to these, not because of any distinction in the faculty itself, is accordingly divided into *speculative* and *practick*; in both of which the image of God was then apparent.

1. For the understanding speculative. There are some general maxims and notions in the mind of man, which are the rules of discourse, and the basis of all philosophy; as that *the same thing cannot at the same time be, and not be*; that *the whole is bigger than a part*; that *two dimensions severally equal to a third, must also be equal to one another*. Aristotle, indeed, affirms the mind to be at first a mere *rasa tabula*; and that these notions are not ingenite, and imprinted by the finger of nature, but by the latter and more languid impressions of sense; being only the reports of observation, and the result of so many repeated experiments.

But to this I answer two things.

(1.) That these notions are universal; and what is universal must needs proceed from some universal, constant principle, the same in all particulars, which here can be nothing else but human nature.

(2.) These cannot be infused by observation, because they are the rules by which men take their first apprehensions and observations of things, and therefore in order of nature must needs precede them; as the being of the rule must be before its application to the thing directed by it. From whence it follows, that these were notions not descending from us, but born with us; not our offspring, but our brethren; and (as I may so say) such as we were taught without the help of a teacher.

Now it was *Adam's* happiness in the state of innocence to have these clear and unsullied. He came into the world a philosopher, which sufficiently appeared by his writing the nature of things upon their names;

he could view essences in themselves, and read forms without the comment of their respective properties; he could see consequents yet dormant in their principles, and effects yet unborn and in the womb of their causes; his understanding could almost pierce into future contingents; his conjectures improving even to prophecy, or the certainties of prediction; till his fall he was ignorant of nothing but of sin; or at least it rested in the notion, without the smart of the experiment. Could any difficulty have been proposed, the resolution would have been as early as the proposal; it could not have had time to settle into doubt. Like a better *Archimedes*, the issue of all his inquiries was an *εὕρηκα*, an *εἵρηκα*, the offspring of his brain without the sweat of his brow. Study was not then a duty, night-watchings were needless; the light of reason wanted not the assistance of a candle. This is the doom of fallen man, to labour in the fire, to seek truth *in profundo*, to exhaust his time and impair his health, and perhaps to spin out his days and himself into one pitiful, controverted conclusion. There was then no poring, no struggling with memory, no straining for invention; his faculties were quick and expedite; they answered without knocking; they were ready upon the first summons; there was freedom and firmness in all their operations. I confess, it is as difficult for us, who date our ignorance from our first being, and were still bred up with the same infirmities about us, with which we were born, to raise our thoughts and imaginations to those intellectual perfections that attended our nature in the time of innocence, as it is for a peasant bred up in the obscurities of a cottage, to fancy in his mind the unseen splendours of a court. But by rating positives by their privatives, and other arts of reason, by which discourse supplies the want of the reports of sense, we may collect the excellency of the understanding then, by the glorious remainders of it now, and guess at the stateliness of

the building, by the magnificence of its ruins. All those arts, rarities, and inventions, which vulgar minds gaze at, the ingenious pursue, and all admire, are but the reliques of an intellect defaced with sin and time.

We admire it now, only as antiquaries do a piece of old coin, for the stamp it once bore, and not for those vanishing lineaments and disappearing draughts that remain upon it at present. And certainly, that must needs have been very glorious, the decays of which are so admirable. He that is comely when old and decrepit, surely was very beautiful when he was young. An *Aristotle* was but the rubbish of an *Adam*, and *Athens* but the rudiments of Paradise.

2. The image of God was no less resplendent in that, which we call man's practical understanding; namely, that store-house of the soul, in which are treasured up the rules of action, and the seeds of morality; where, we must observe, that many who deny all connate notions in the speculative intellect, do yet admit them in this. Now of this sort are these maxims: *that God is to be worshipped*; *that parents are to be honoured*; *that a man's word is to be kept*, and the like; which, being of universal influence, as to the regulation of the behaviour and converse of mankind, are the ground of all virtue and civility, and the foundation of religion.

It was the privilege of *Adam* innocent, to have these notions also firm and untainted, to carry his monitor in his bosom, his law in his heart, and to have such a conscience as might be its own casuist; and certainly those actions must needs be regular, where there is an identity between the rule and the faculty. His own mind taught him a due dependence upon God, and chalked out to him the just proportions and measures of behaviour to his fellow-creatures. He had no catechism but the creation, needed no study but reflection, read no book but the volume of the world, and that too, not for rules to work by, but for the objects to

work upon. Reason was his tutor, and first principles his *magna moralia*. The decalogue of *Moses* was but a transcript, not an original. All the laws of nations, and wise decrees of states, the statutes of *Solon*, and the twelve tables, were but a paraphrase upon this standing rectitude of nature; this fruitful principle of justice, that was ready to run out, and enlarge itself into suitable determinations, upon all emergent objects and occasions. Justice then was neither blind to discern, nor lame to execute. It was not subject to be imposed upon by a deluded fancy, nor yet to be bribed by a glozing appetite, for an *utile* or *jucundum* to turn the balance to a false or dishonest sentence. In all its directions of the inferior faculties, it conveyed its suggestions with clearness, and enjoined them with power; it had the passions in perfect subjection; and, though its command over them was but suasive and political, yet it had the force of absolute and despotical. It was not then, as it is now, where the conscience has only power to disapprove and to protest against the exorbitances of the passions, and rather to wish, than make them otherwise. The voice of conscience now is low and weak, chastising the passions, as old *Eli* did his lustful, domineering sons:—*Not so, my sons, not so*. Then it spoke like a legislator; the thing spoke was a law; and the manner of speaking it a new obligation. In short, there was as great a disparity between the practical dictates of the understanding then, and now, as there is between empire and advice, counsel and command, between a companion and a governor.

And thus much for the image of God as it shone in man's understanding.

II. Let us in the next place take a view of it, as it was stamped upon the will. It is much disputed by divines concerning the power of man's will to *good and evil* in the state of innocence; and upon very nice and dangerous precipices stand their determinations on

either side. Some hold that God invested him with a *power to stand*, so that in the strength of that power received, he might without the auxiliaries of any further influence have determined his will to a full choice of good. Others hold, that notwithstanding this power, yet it was impossible for him to exert it in any good action, without a superadded assistance of grace actually determining that power to the certain production of such an act; so that, whereas some distinguish between *sufficient* and *effectual* grace, they order the matter so, as to acknowledge none *sufficient*, but what is indeed *effectual*, and actually productive of a good action.

I shall not presume to interpose dogmatically in a controversy, which I look never to see decided. Doubtless the will of man in the state of innocence, had an entire freedom, a perfect equipendency to either part of the contradiction, *to stand*, or *not to stand*; *to accept*, or *not accept* the temptation. I will grant the will of man now to be as much a slave as any one will have it, and to be only *free to sin*; that is, instead of a liberty, to have only a licentiousness; yet certainly this is not nature, but chance. We were not born crooked; we learnt these windings and turnings of the serpent; and therefore it cannot but be a blasphemous piece of ingratitude to ascribe them to God, and to make the plague of our nature, the condition of our creation.

The will was then ductile, and pliant to all the motions of right reason; it met the dictates of a clarified understanding half way. And the *active informations* of the intellect, filling the *passive reception* of the will, like *form* closing with *matter*, grew actuate into a third and distinct perfection of practice. The understanding and will never disagreed; for the proposals of the one never thwarted the inclinations of the other. Yet neither did the will servilely attend upon the understanding, but as a favourite does upon his prince, where

the service is privilege and preferment ; or as *Solomon's* servants waited upon him, it admired its wisdom, and heard its prudent dictates and counsels, both the direction and the reward of its obedience. It is indeed the nature of this faculty to follow a superior guide, to be drawn by the intellect ; but then it was drawn, as a triumphant chariot, which at the same time both *follows* and *triumphs* ; while it obeyed this, it commanded the other faculties. It was subordinate, not enslaved to the understanding ; not as a servant to a master, but as a queen to her king, who both acknowledges a subjection, and yet retains a majesty.

Pass we downward from man's intellect and will,

III. To the passions, which have their residence and situation chiefly in the sensitive appetite. For we must know, that inasmuch as man is a compound and mixture of flesh as well as spirit, the soul, during its abode in the body, does all things by the mediation of these passions and inferior affections. And here the opinion of the *Stoics* was famous and singular, who looked upon all these as sinful defects and irregularities, as so many deviations from right reason, making *passion* to be only another word for *perturbation*. *Sorrow* in their esteem was a sin scarce to be expiated by another ; *to pity*, was a fault ; *to rejoice*, an extravagance ; and the apostle's advice, *to be angry and sin not*, was a contradiction in their philosophy. But in this they were constantly outvoted by other sects of philosophers, neither for fame nor number less than themselves ; so that all arguments brought against them from divinity, would come in by way of overplus to their confutation. To us let this be sufficient, that our Saviour Christ, who took upon him all our *natural* infirmities, but none of our *sinful*, has been seen to *weep*, to *be sorrowful*, to *pity*, and to *be angry* ; which shows that there might be gall in a dove, passion without sin, fire without smoke, and motion without disturbance. For it is not bare agitation, but the sediment

at the bottom, that troubles and defiles the water; and when we see it windy and dusty, the wind does not (as we use to say) *make*, but only *raise* a dust.

Now, though the schools reduce all the passions to these two heads, the *concupiscible*, and the *irascible* appetite; yet I shall not tie myself to an exact prosecution of them under this division, but at this time, leaving both their terms and their method to themselves, consider only the principal and most noted passions, from whence we may take an estimate of the rest.

And first, for the grand leading affection of all, which is *Love*. This is the great instrument and engine of nature, the bond and cement of society, the spring and spirit of the universe. Love is such an affection, as cannot so properly be said to be in the soul, as the soul to be in that. It is the whole man wrapt up into one desire; all the powers, vigour, and faculties of the soul abridged into one inclination. And it is of that active, restless nature, that it must of necessity exert itself; and like the *fire*, to which it is so often compared, it is not a free agent, to choose whether it will heat or no, but it streams forth by natural results and unavoidable emanations; so that it will fasten upon an inferior, unsuitable object, rather than none at all. The soul may sooner leave off to subsist, than to love; and, like the vine, it withers and dies, if it has nothing to embrace. Now this affection in the state of innocence was happily pitched upon its right object; it flamed up in direct fervors of devotion to God, and in collateral emissions of charity to its neighbour. It was not then only another and more cleanly name for lust. It had none of those impure heats, that both represent and deserve hell. It was a vestal and a virgin fire, and differed as much from that, which usually passes by this name now-a-days, as the vital heat from *the burning* of a fever.

Then, for the contrary passion of *Hatred*. This, we

know, is the passion of defiance, and there is a kind of aversation and hostility included in its very essence and being. But then (if there could have been hatred in the world, when there was scarce any thing odious) it would have acted within the compass of its proper object; like aloes, bitter indeed, but wholesome. There would have been no rancour, no hatred of our brother; an innocent nature could hate nothing that was innocent. In a word, so great is the commutation, that the soul then hated only that, which now only it loves, that is, sin.

And if we may bring *Anger* under this head, as being, according to some, a transient hatred, or at least very like it; this also, as unruly as now it is, yet then it vented itself by the measures of reason. There was no such thing as the transports of malice, or the violences of revenge; no rendering evil for evil, when *evil* was truly a *nonentity*, and no where to be found. Anger was then like the sword of justice, keen, but innocent and righteous; it did not act like fury, then call itself zeal. It always espoused God's honour, and never kindled upon any thing but in order to a sacrifice. It sparkled like the coal upon the altar, with the fervours of piety, the heats of devotion, the sallies and *vibrations* of an harmless activity.

Next, for the lightsome passion of *Joy*. It was not that, which now often usurps this name; that trivial, vanishing, superficial thing, that only gilds the apprehension, and plays upon the surface of the soul. It was not the mere crackling of thorns, a sudden blaze of the spirits, the exultation of a tickled fancy, or a pleased appetite. Joy was then a masculine and a severe thing; the recreation of the judgment, the jubilee of reason. It was the result of a real good, suitably applied. It commenced upon the solidities of truth, and the substance of fruition. It did not run out in voice, or undecent eruptions, but filled the soul, as God does the universe, silently and without noise.

It was refreshing, but composed ; like the pleasantness of youth tempered with the gravity of age ; or the mirth of a festival managed with the silence of contemplation.

And, on the other side, for *Sorrow*. Had any loss or disaster made but room for grief, it would have moved according to the severe allowances of prudence, and the proportions of the provocation. It would not have sallied out into complaint or loudness, nor spread itself upon the face, and writ sad stories upon the forehead. No wringing of the hands, knocking the breast, or wishing one's self unborn ; all which are but the ceremonies of sorrow, the pomp and ostentation of an effeminate grief ; which speak not so much the greatness of the misery, as the smallness of the mind. Tears may spoil the eyes, but not wash away the affliction. Sighs may exhaust the man, but not eject the burthen. Sorrow then would have been as silent as thought, as severe as philosophy. It would have rested in inward senses, tacit dislikes ; and the whole scene of it been transacted in sad and *silent* reflections.

Then again for *Hope*. Though indeed the fulness and affluence of man's enjoyments in the state of innocence, might seem to leave no place for hope, in respect of any farther addition, but only of the prorogation of what already he possessed. Yet doubtless, God, who made no faculty, but also provided it with a proper object, upon which it might lay out itself, even in its greatest innocence, did then exercise man's hopes with the expectations of a better paradise, or a more intimate admission to himself. For it is not imaginable, that *Adam* could fix upon such poor, thin enjoyments, as riches, pleasure, and the gayeties of an animal life. Hope indeed was always the anchor of the soul, yet certainly it was not to catch or fasten upon such mud. And if, as the apostle says, *no man hopes for that which he sees*, much less could *Adam* then hope for *such* things as he *saw* through.

And lastly, for the affection of *Fear*. It was then the instrument of caution, not of anxiety; a guard, and not a torment to the breast that had it. It is now indeed an unhappiness, the disease of the soul; it flies from a shadow, and makes more dangers than it avoids; it weakens the judgment, and betrays the succours of reason; so hard is it to tremble, and not to err, and to hit the mark with a shaking hand. Then it fixed upon him who is only to be feared, God; and yet with a filial fear, which at the same time both fears and loves. It was awe without amazement, dread without distraction. There was then a beauty even in this very paleness. It was the colour of devotion, giving a lustre to reverence, and a gloss to humility.

Thus did the passions then act without any of their present jars, combats, or repugnances; all moving with the beauty of uniformity, and the stillness of composure. Like a well-governed army, not for fighting, but for rank and order. I confess the scripture does not expressly attribute these several endowments to *Adam* in his first estate. But all that I have said, and much more, may be drawn out of that short aphorism, *God made man upright*. Eccl. vii. 29. And since the opposite weaknesses now infest the nature of man fallen, if we will be true to the rule of contraries, we must conclude that those perfections were the lot of man innocent.

Now from this so exact and regular composure of the faculties, all moving in their due place, each striking in its proper time, there arose, by natural consequence, the crowning perfection of all, *a good conscience*. For, as in the body, when the principal parts, as the *heart* and *liver*, do their offices, and all the inferior, smaller vessels act orderly and duly, there arises a sweet enjoyment upon the whole, which we call *health*; so in the soul, when the supreme faculties of the will and understanding move regularly, the inferior passions and affections following, there arises a serenity and

complacency upon the whole soul, infinitely beyond the greatest bodily pleasures, the highest quintessence and elixir of worldly delights. There is in this case a kind of fragranciness and spiritual perfume upon the conscience; much like what *Isaac* spoke of his son's garments; *that the scent of them was like the smell of a field which the Lord had blessed*. Such a freshness and flavour is there upon the soul, when daily watered with the actions of a virtuous life. Whatsoever is pure, is also pleasant.

Having thus surveyed the image of God in the soul of man, we are not to omit now those characters of majesty that God imprinted upon the body. He drew some traces of his image upon this also; as much as a spiritual substance could be pictured upon a corporeal. As for the sect of the *Anthropomorphites*, who from hence ascribe to God the figure of a man, *eyes, hands, feet*, and the like, they are too ridiculous to deserve a confutation. They would seem to draw this impiety from the *letter* of the scripture sometimes speaking of God in this manner. Absurdly! as if the mercy of scripture expressions ought to warrant the blasphemy of our opinions; and not rather show us, that God condescends to us, only to draw us to himself, and clothes himself in our likeness, only to win us to his own. The practice of the *papists* is much of the same nature, in their absurd and impious picturing of God Almighty. But the wonder in them is the less, since the image of a Deity may be a proper object for that, which is but the image of a religion. But to the purpose: *Adam* was then no less glorious in his externals; he had a beautiful body, as well as an immortal soul. The whole compound was like a well-built temple, stately without, and sacred within. The elements were at perfect union and agreement in his body; and their contrary qualities served not for the dissolution of the compound, but the variety of the composure. *Galen*, who had no more

divinity than what his physic taught him, barely upon the consideration of this so exact frame of the body, challenges any one, upon an hundred years' study, to find how any the least fibre, or most minute particle, might be more commodiously placed, either for the advantage of use or comeliness. His stature erect, and tending upwards to his center; his countenance majestic and comely, with the lustre of a native beauty, that scorned the poor assistance of art, or the attempts of imitation; his body of so much quickness and agility, that it did not only contain, but also represent the soul; for we might well suppose, that where God did deposit so rich a jewel, he would suitably adorn the case. It was a fit work-house for spritely, vivid faculties to exercise and exert themselves in; a fit tabernacle for an immortal soul, not only to dwell in, but to contemplate upon, where it might see the world without travel, it being a lesser scheme of the creation, nature contracted, a little cosmography or map of the universe. Neither was the body then subject to distempers, to die by piece-meal, and languish under coughs, catarrhs, or consumptions. *Adam* knew no disease, so long as temperance from the forbidden fruit secured him. Nature was his physician; and innocence and abstinence would have kept him healthful to immortality.

Now the use of this point might be various, but at present it shall be only this; to remind us of the irreparable loss that we sustained in our first parents, to show us of how fair a portion *Adam* disinherited his whole posterity by one single prevarication. Take the picture of a man in the greenness and vivacity of his youth, and in the latter date and declensions of his drooping years, and you will scarce know it to belong to the same person; there would be more art to discern, than at first to draw it. The same and greater is the difference between man innocent and fallen. He is, as it were, a new kind or species; the plague

of sin has even altered his nature, and eaten into his very essentials. The image of God is wiped out, the creatures have shook off his yoke, renounced his sovereignty, and revolted from his dominion. Distempers and diseases have shattered the excellent frame of his body; and, by a new dispensation, *immortality is swallowed up of mortality*. The same disaster and decay also has invaded his spirituals; the passions rebel, every faculty would usurp and rule; and there are so many governors, that there can be no government. The light within us is become darkness; and the understanding, that should be eyes to the blind faculty of the will, is blind itself, and so brings all the inconveniences that attend a blind follower under the conduct of a blind guide. He that would have a clear, ocular demonstration of this, let him reflect upon that numerous litter of strange, senseless, absurd opinions, that crawl about the world, to the disgrace of reason, and the unanswerable reproach of a broken intellect.

The two great perfections, that both adorn and exercise man's understanding, are *philosophy* and *religion*: For the first of these; take it even amongst the professors of it, where it most flourished, and we shall find the very first notions of common sense debauched by them; for there have been such as have asserted, *that there is no such thing in the world as motion; that contradictions may be true*. There has not been wanting one, that has denied *snow to be white*. Such a stupidity or wantonness had seized upon the most raised wits, that it might be doubted, whether the philosophers or the owls of *Athens* were the quicker sighted. But then for religion; what prodigious, monstrous, misshapen births has the reason of fallen man produced! It is now almost six thousand years, that far the greatest part of the world has had no other religion but idolatry; and idolatry certainly is the first born of folly, the great and leading paradox; nay, the very abridgment and sum total of all absurdi-

ties. For is it not strange, that a rational man should worship an ox, nay, the image of an ox? That he should fawn upon his dog? Bow himself before a cat? Adore leeks and garlic, and shed penitential tears at the smell of a deified onion? Yet so did the *Egyptians*, once the famed masters of all arts and learning. And to go a little farther; we have yet a stranger instance in *Isa. xlv.* *A man hews him down a tree in the wood, and part of it he burns; with the residue thereof he maketh a God.* With one part he furnishes his chimney, with the other his chapel. A strange thing that the fire must first consume this part, and then burn incense to that; as if there was more divinity in one end of the stick, than in the other; or, as if it could be graved and painted Omnipotent, or the nails and hammer could give it an *apotheosis*. Briefly, so great is the change, so deplorable the degradation of our nature, that, whereas before we bore the image of God, we now retain only the image of men.

In the last place, we learn from hence the excellency of the christian religion, in that it is the great and only means that God has sanctified and designed to repair the breaches of humanity, to set fallen man upon his legs again, to clarify his reason, to rectify his will, and to compose and regulate his affections. The whole business of our redemption is, in short, only to rub over the defaced copy of the creation, to reprint God's image upon the soul, and, as it were, to set forth nature in a second and fairer edition.

The recovery of which lost image, as it is God's pleasure to command, and our duty to endeavour, so it is in his power only to effect.

DISCOURSE II.*

THE PLEASURES OF RELIGIOUS WISDOM.

PROV. iii. 17.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness.

THE thing, of which these words are affirmed, is wisdom; a name by which the Spirit of God was here pleased to express to us religion, and thereby to tell the world, what before it was not aware of, and perhaps will not yet believe, that those two great things that so engross the desires and designs of both the nobler and ignobler sort of mankind, are to be found in religion; namely, *wisdom* and *pleasure*; and that the former is the direct way to the latter, as religion is to both.

That pleasure is man's chiefest good (because indeed it is the perception of good that is properly pleasure) is an assertion most certainly true, though, under the common acceptance of it, not only false, but odious; for, according to this, pleasure and sensuality pass for terms equivalent; and therefore, he that takes it in this sense alters the subject of the discourse. Sensuality is indeed a part, or rather one kind of pleasure, such an one as it is; for pleasure, in general, is the consequent apprehension of a suitable object, /

[* "This charming discourse has in it whatever wit and wisdom can bring together."—Tatler, No. 205.—Ed.]

suitably applied to a rightly disposed faculty, and so must be conversant both about the faculties of the body and of the soul respectively, as being the result of the fruitions belonging to both.

Now amongst those many arguments, used to press upon men the exercise of religion, I know none that are like to be so successful, as those that answer and remove the prejudices that generally possess and bar up the hearts of men against it; amongst which there is none so prevalent in truth, though so little owned in pretence, as that it is an enemy to men's pleasures, that it bereaves them of all the sweets of converse, dooms them to an absurd and perpetual melancholy, designing to make the world nothing else but a great monastery; with which notion of religion, nature and reason seem to have great cause to be dissatisfied. For since God never created any faculty, but withal prepared for it a suitable object, and that in order to its gratification, can we think that religion was designed only for a contradiction to nature? And with the most irrational tyranny in the world, to tantalize and tie men up from enjoyment, in the midst of all the opportunities of enjoyment? To place men with the furious affections of hunger and thirst in the very bosom of plenty, and then to tell them, that the envy of Providence has sealed up every thing that is *suitable*, under the character of *unlawful*? For certainly, first to frame appetites fit to receive pleasure, and then to interdict them with a *touch not, taste not*, can be nothing else, than only to give them occasion to prey upon themselves, and so to keep men under the perpetual torment of an unsatisfied desire; a thing hugely contrary to the natural felicity of the creature, and consequently to the wisdom and goodness of the great Creator.

He therefore that would persuade men to religion, both with art and efficacy, must found the persuasion of it upon this, that it interferes not with any rational

pleasure, that it bids no body quit the enjoyment of any one thing that his reason can prove to him ought to be enjoyed. It is confessed, when through the cross circumstances of a man's temper or condition, the enjoyment of a pleasure would certainly expose him to a greater inconvenience, then religion bids him to quit it ; that is, it bids him prefer the endurance of a lesser evil before a greater, and nature itself does no less. Religion therefore intrrenches upon none of our privileges, invades none of our pleasures ; it may indeed sometimes command us to *change*, but never totally to *abjure* them.

But it is easily foreseen, that this discourse will in the very beginning of it be encountered by an argument from experience, and therefore not more obvious than strong ; namely, that it cannot but be the greatest trouble in the world for a man thus, as it were, even to shake off himself, and to defy his nature, by a perpetual thwarting of his innate appetites and desires, which yet is absolutely necessary to a severe and impartial prosecution of a course of piety ; nay, and we have this asserted also by the verdict of Christ himself, who still makes the disciplines of self-denial and the cross, those terrible blows to flesh and blood, the indispensable requisites to the being of his disciples ; all which being so, would not he that should be so hardy as to attempt to persuade men to piety from the pleasures of it, be liable to that invective taunt from all mankind, that the *Israelites* gave to *Moses* : *Wilt thou put out the eyes of this people ?* Wilt thou persuade us out of our first notions ? Wilt thou demonstrate, that there is any delight in a cross, any comfort in violent abridgments, and, which is the greatest paradox of all, that the highest pleasure is to abstain from it ?

It must be confessed, that all arguments whatsoever against experience are fallacious ; and therefore, in order to the clearing of the assertion laid down, I shall premise these two considerations.

1. That pleasure is in the nature of it a relative thing, and so imports a peculiar correspondence to the state and condition of the person to whom it is a pleasure. For as those who discourse of atoms, affirm, that there are atoms of all forms, some round, some triangular, some square, and the like ; all which are continually in motion and never settle till they fall into a fit circumscription or place of the same figure ; so there are the like great diversities of minds and objects. Whence it is, that this object striking upon a mind thus or thus disposed, flies off, and rebounds without making any impression ; but the same luckily happening upon another of a disposition, as it were, framed for it, is presently caught at, and greedily clasped into the nearest unions and embraces.

2. The other thing to be considered is this : That the estate of all men by nature is more or less different from that estate, into which the same persons do, or may pass, by the exercise of that which the philosophers called *Virtue*, and into which men are much more effectually and sublimely translated by that which we call *Grace* ; that is, by the overpowering operation of God's Spirit ; the difference of which two estates consists in this ; that in the former, the sensitive appetites domineer ; in the latter, the supreme faculty of the soul, called *Reason*, sways the sceptre, and acts the whole man above the irregular demands of appetite and affection.

That the distinction between these two is not a mere figment, framed only to serve an hypothesis in divinity ; and that there is no man but is really under one, before he is under the other, I shall prove, by showing a reason why it is so, or rather indeed why it cannot but be so. And it is this ; because every man in the beginning of his life, for several years, is capable only of exercising his sensitive faculties and desires, the use of reason not showing itself till about the seventh year of his age ; and then at length but, as it were, dawn-

ing in very imperfect essays and discoveries. Now it being most evident, that every power grows stronger and stronger by exercise, is it any wonder at all, when a man for the space of his first six years, and those the years of ductility and impression, has been wholly ruled by the propensions of sense, at that age very eager and impetuous, that then, after all, his reason, beginning to exert itself, finds the man prepossessed and under another power? So that it has much ado, by many little steps and gradual conquests, to recover its prerogative and so to subject the whole man to its dictates; the difficulty of which is not conquered by some men all their days. And this is one true ground of the difference between a state of nature and a state of grace, which some are pleased to scoff at in divinity, who think that they confute all that they laugh at, not knowing that it may be solidly evinced by mere reason and philosophy.

These two considerations being premised, all that objection levelled against the foregoing assertion is very easily resolvable.

For there is no doubt, but a man, while he resigns himself up to the brutish guidance of sense and appetite, has no relish at all for the spiritual, refined delights of a soul clarified by grace and virtue. The pleasures of an angel can never be the pleasures of a hog. But this is the thing that we contend for; that a man having once advanced himself to a state of superiority over the control of his inferior appetites, finds an infinitely more solid and sublime pleasure in the delights proper to his reason, than the same person had ever conveyed to him by the bare ministry of his senses. His taste is absolutely changed, and therefore that which pleased him formerly becomes flat and insipid to his appetite, now grown more masculine and severe. For as age and maturity passes a real and a marvellous change upon the diet and recreations of the same person, so that no man, at the years and vigour

of thirty, is either fond of sugar-plumbs or rattles ; in like manner, when reason, by the assistance of grace, has prevailed over and out-grown the encroachments of sense, the delights of sensuality are to such an one but as an hobby-horse would be to a counsellor of state ; or as tasteless as a bundle of hay to a hungry lion. Every alteration of a man's condition infallibly infers an alteration of his pleasures.

The *Athenians* laughed the physiognomist to scorn, who, pretending to read men's minds in their foreheads, described *Socrates* for a crabbed, lustful, proud, ill-natured person ; they knowing how directly contrary he was to that dirty character. But *Socrates* bid them forbear laughing at the man, for that he had given them a most exact account of his nature ; but what they saw in him so contrary at the present, was from the conquest that he had got over his natural disposition by philosophy. And now let any one consider, whether that *anger, revenge, wantonness, and ambition*, that were the proper pleasures of *Socrates*, under his natural temper, could have at all affected or enamoured the mind of the same *Socrates*, made gentle, chaste, and humble, by philosophy.

Aristotle says, that were it possible to put a young man's eye into an old man's head, he would see as plainly and clearly as the other ; so could we infuse the inclinations and principles of a virtuous person into him that prosecutes his debauches with the greatest keenness of desire and sense of delight, he would loath and reject them as heartily, as he now pursues them. *Diogenes*, being asked at a feast, why he did not continue eating as the rest did, answered him that asked him with another question, Pray why do you eat ? Why, says he, for my pleasure ; why, so, says *Diogenes*, do I abstain for my pleasure. And therefore the vain, the vicious, and luxurious person argues at an high rate of inconsequence, when he makes his particular desires, the general measure of other men's

delights. But the case is so plain, that I shall not upbraid any man's understanding, by endeavouring to give it any farther illustration.

But still, after all, I must not deny that the passage from a state of nature to a state of virtue is laborious, and consequently irksome and unpleasant ; and to this it is, that all the forementioned expressions of our Saviour do allude. But surely the baseness of one condition, and the generous excellency of the other, is a sufficient argument to induce any one to a change. For as no man would think it a desirable thing to preserve the itch upon himself, only for the pleasure of scratching, that attends that loathsome distemper ; so neither can any man, that would be faithful to his reason, yield his ear to be bored through by his domineering appetites, and so choose to serve them for ever, only for those poor, thin gratifications of sensuality that they are able to reward him with. The ascent up the hill is hard and tedious, but the serenity and fair prospect at the top is sufficient to incite the labour of undertaking it, and to reward it being undertook. But the difference of these two conditions of men, as the foundation of their different pleasures, being thus made out, to press men with arguments to pass from one to the other, is not directly in the way of this discourse.

Yet before I come to declare positively the pleasures that are to be found in the *ways* of religion, one of the grand duties of which is stated upon repentance ; a thing expressed to us by the grim names of mortification, crucifixion, and the like ; and that I may not proceed only upon absolute negations, without some concessions, we will see, whether this so harsh, dismal, and affrighting duty of repentance is so entirely gall, as to admit of no allay of sweetness, to reconcile it to the apprehensions of reason and nature.

Now repentance consists properly of two things :

1. Sorrow for sin.
2. Change of life.

1. And first, of *sorrow for sin*: Usually, the sting of sorrow is this, that it neither removes nor alters the thing we sorrow for; and so is but a kind of reproach to our reason, which will be sure to accost us with this dilemma. Either the thing we sorrow for is to be remedied, or it is not; if it is, why then do we spend the time in mourning, which should be spent in an active applying of remedies? But if it is not; then is our sorrow vain, as tending to no real effect. For no man can weep his father, or his friend, out of the grave, or mourn himself out of a bankrupt condition. But this spiritual sorrow is effectual to one of the greatest and highest purposes that mankind can be concerned in. It is a means to avert an impendent wrath, to disarm an offended Omnipotence; and even to fetch a soul out of the very jaws of hell; so that the end and consequence of this sorrow sweetens the sorrow itself; and, as *Solomon* says, *in the midst of laughter, the heart is sorrowful*; so in the midst of sorrow here, the heart may rejoice; for while it mourns, it reads, that *those that mourn shall be comforted*; and so while the penitent weeps with one eye, he views his deliverance with the other. But then for the external expressions and vent of sorrow; we know that there is a certain pleasure in weeping; it is the discharge of a big and a swelling grief; of a full and a strangling discontent; and therefore he that never had such a burthen upon his heart, as to give him opportunity thus to ease it, has one pleasure in this *world* yet to come.

2. As for the other part of repentance, which is change of life, this indeed may be troublesome in the entrance; yet it is but the first bold onset, the first resolute violence and invasion upon a vicious habit, that is so sharp and afflicting. Every impression of the lancet cuts, but it is the first only that smarts. Besides, it is an argument hugely unreasonable, to plead the pain of passing *from* a vicious estate, unless it were proved, that there was none in the continuance *un-*

der it. But surely, when we read of the *bondage* and *captivity* of *sinner*s, we are not entertained only with the air of words and metaphors; and instead of truth, put off with similitudes. Let him that says it is a trouble to refrain from a debauch, convince us, that it is not a greater to undergo one; and that the confessor did not impose a shrewd penance upon the drunken man, by bidding him go and be drunk again; and that lisping, raging, redness of eyes, and what is not fit to be named in such an audience, is not more toilsome, than to be clean, and quiet, and discreet, and respected for being so. All the trouble that is in it, is the trouble of being sound, being cured, and being recovered. But if there be great arguments for health, then certainly there are the same for the obtaining of it; and so keeping a due proportion between spirituals and temporals, we neither have nor pretend to greater arguments for repentance.

Having thus now cleared off all, that by way of objection can lie against the truth asserted, by showing the proper qualification of the subject, to whom only the *ways of wisdom* can be *ways of pleasantness*; for the farther prosecution of the matter in hand, I shall show what are those properties that so peculiarly set off and enhance the excellency of this pleasure.

I. The first is, that it is the proper pleasure of that part of man, which is the largest and most comprehensive of pleasure, and that is, his mind; a substance of a boundless comprehension. The mind of man is an image, not only of God's spirituality, but of his infinity. It is not like any of the senses, limited to this or that kind of object; as the sight intermeddles not with that which affects the smell; but with an universal superintendence it arbitrates upon and takes them in all. It is (as I may so say) an ocean, into which all the little rivulets of sensation, both external and internal, discharge themselves. It is framed by God to receive all, and more than nature can afford it; and so to be

its own motive to seek for something above nature. Now this is that part of man, to which the pleasures of religion properly belong; and that in a double respect.

1. In reference to speculation, as it sustains the name of Understanding. 2. In reference to practice, as it sustains the name of Conscience.

1. And first for speculation; the pleasures of which have been sometimes so great, so intense, so ingrossing of all the powers of the soul, that there has been no room left for any other pleasure. It has so called together all the spirits to that one work, that there has been no supply to carry on the inferior operations of nature. Contemplation feels no hunger, nor is sensible of any thirst, but of that after knowledge. How frequent and exalted a pleasure did *David* find from his meditation in the divine law! *All the day long* it was the theme of his thoughts. The affairs of state might indeed employ, but it was this only that refreshed his mind.

How short of this are the delights of the epicure! How vastly disproportioned are the pleasures of the eating, and of the thinking man! Indeed as different as the silence of an *Archimedes* in the study of a problem, and the stillness of a sow at her wash. Nothing is comparable to the pleasure of an active, and a prevailing thought; a thought prevailing over the difficulty and obscurity of the object, and refreshing the soul with new discoveries and images of things; and thereby extending the bounds of apprehension, and, as it were, the territories of reason.

Now this pleasure of the speculation of divine things is advanced upon a double account.

(1.) The greatness. (2.) The newness of the object.

(1.) And first for the greatness of it. It is no less than the great God himself, and that both in his nature and his works. For the eye of reason, like that of the

eagle, directs itself chiefly to the sun, to a glory that neither admits of a superior nor an equal. Religion carries the soul to the study of every divine attribute.

It poses it with the amazing thoughts of Omnipotence, of a Power able to fetch up such a glorious fabric, as this of the world, out of the abyss of nothing, and able to throw it back into the same original nothing again. It drowns us in the speculation of the divine Omniscience, that can maintain a steady infallible comprehension of all events in themselves contingent and accidental, and certainly know that which does not certainly exist. It confounds the greatest subtleties of speculation with the riddles of God's Omnipresence, that can spread a single individual substance through all spaces, and yet without any commensuration of parts to any, or circumscription *within* any, though totally in every one. And then for his Eternity ; which *nonplusses* the strongest and clearest conception, to comprehend how one single act of duration should measure all periods and portions of time, without any of the distinguishing parts of succession. Likewise for his Justice ; which shall prey upon the sinner for ever, satisfying itself by a perpetual miracle, rendering the creature immortal in the midst of the flames, always consuming, but never consumed. With the like wonders we may entertain our speculations from his Mercy, his beloved, his triumphant attribute ; an attribute, if it were possible, something more than infinite ; for even his justice is so, and his mercy transcends that. Lastly, we may contemplate upon his supernatural, astonishing works, particularly in the reparation of the same numerical body, by a re-union of all the scattered parts, to be at length disposed of into an estate of eternal wo or bliss ; as also the greatness and strangeness of the beatific vision, how a created eye should be so fortified, as to bear all those glories that stream from the fountain of uncreated light, the meanest expression of which light is, that it is unexpressible. Now what

great and high objects are these, for a rational contemplation to busy itself upon ! Heights that scorn the reach of our prospect, and depths in which the tallest reason will never touch the bottom ; yet surely the pleasure arising from thence is great and noble ; forasmuch as they afford perpetual employment to the inquisitiveness of human reason, and so are large enough for it to take its full range in ; which, when it has sucked and drained the utmost of an object, naturally lays it aside, and neglects it as a dry and empty thing.

(2.) As the things belonging to religion entertain our speculation with great objects, so they entertain it also with new ; and novelty, we know, is the great parent of pleasure ; upon which account it is that men are so much pleased with variety, and variety is nothing else but a continued novelty. The *Athenians*, who were the most diligent improvers of their reason, made it their whole business *to hear or to tell some new thing* ; for the truth is, newness, especially in great matters, was a worthy entertainment for a searching mind ; it was (as I may so say) an high taste, fit for the relish of an *Athenian* reason. And thereupon the mere unheard-of strangeness of *Jesus* and the resurrection made them desirous to hear it discoursed of to them again. But how would it have employed their searching faculties, had the mystery of the Trinity and the incarnation, and the whole economy of man's redemption, been explained to them ? For how could it ever enter into the thoughts of reason, that a satisfaction could be paid to an infinite Justice ; or, that two natures, so inconceivably different as the human and divine, could unite into one person ? The knowledge of these things could derive from nothing else but pure revelation, and consequently must be purely *new* to the highest discourses of mere nature. Now that the newness of an object so exceedingly strikes the mind, appears from one consideration, that every thing pleases more in expectation than fruition ; and

expectation supposes a thing as yet new, the hoped-for discovery of which is the pleasure that entertains the inquiring mind ; whereas actual discovery, as it were, rifles and deflowers the freshness of the object, and so for the most part makes it cheap and contemptible.

2. In the next place, religion is a pleasure to the mind, as it respects practice, and so sustains the name of conscience. And conscience undoubtedly is the great magazine of all these pleasures that can afford any solid refreshment to the soul. For when this is serene and absolving, then properly a man enjoys all things, and what is more, himself ; for that he must do, before he can enjoy any thing else. But it is only a pious life, led exactly by the rules of a severe religion, that can authorize a man's conscience to speak comfortably to him ; it is this that must word the sentence, before the conscience can pronounce it, and then it will do it with majesty and authority ; it will not whisper, but proclaim a *jubilee* to the mind ; it will not drop, but pour in oil upon the wounded heart. And is there any pleasure comparable to that which springs from hence ? Not only greater than all other pleasures, but may also serve instead of them ; for they only affect the mind *in transitu*, in the pitiful narrow compass of actual fruition ; whereas that of conscience feeds it a long time after with durable, lasting reflections.

And thus much for the first ennobling property of the pleasure belonging to religion ; that it is the pleasure of the mind ; and that, both as it relates to speculation, and is called the understanding, and as it relates to practice, and is called the conscience.

II. The second ennobling property of it is, that it is such a pleasure as never satiates ; for it properly affects the spirit, and a spirit feels no weariness, as being privileged from the causes of it. But can the epicure say so of any of the pleasures that he so much

dotes upon ? Do they not expire, while they satisfy ; and, after a few minutes' refreshment, determine in loathing and unquietness ? How short is the interval between a pleasure and a burden ! How undiscernible the transition from one to the other ! Pleasure dwells no longer upon the appetite, than the necessities of nature, which are quickly and easily provided for ; and then all that follows is a load and an oppression. Every morsel to a satisfied hunger is only a new labour to a tired digestion. Every draught to him that has quenched his thirst is but a farther quenching of nature ; a provision for rheum and diseases, a drowning of the quickness and activity of the spirits.

He that prolongs his meals, and sacrifices his time, as well as his other conveniences, to his luxury, how quickly does he out-sit his pleasure ! And then, how is all the following time bestowed upon ceremony and surfeit ; till at length, after a long fatigue of eating, and drinking, and babbling, he concludes the great work of dining genteelly, and so makes a shift to rise from table, that he may lie down upon his bed ; where, after he has slept himself into some use of himself, by much ado he staggers to his table again, and there acts over the same brutish scene ; so that he passes his whole life in a dozed condition between sleeping and waking, with a kind of drowsiness upon his senses ; which, what pleasure it can be, is hard to conceive ; all that is of it, dwells upon the tip of his tongue, and within the compass of his palate : a worthy prize for a man to purchase with the loss of his time, his reason, and himself.

Nor is that man less deceived, that thinks to maintain a constant tenure of pleasure, by a continual pursuit of sports and recreations ; for it is most certainly true of all these things, that as they refresh a man when he is weary, so they weary him when he is refreshed ; which is an evident demonstration that God never designed the use of them to be continual, by putting such

an emptiness in them as should so quickly fail and lurch the expectation.

The most voluptuous person breathing, were he but tied to follow his hawks, and his hounds, his dice and his courtships, every day, would find it the greatest torment that could befall him ; he would fly to the *mines* and the *gallies* for his recreation, and to the *spade* and the *mattock* for a diversion from the misery of a continual unintermitted pleasure.

But, on the contrary, the Providence of God has so ordered the course of things, that there is no action, the usefulness of which has made it the matter of duty and of a profession, but a man may bear the continual pursuit of it without loathing or satiety. The same shop and trade, that employs a man in his youth, employs him also in his age. Every morning he rises fresh to his hammer and his anvil ; he passes the day singing ; custom has naturalized his labour to him ; his shop is his element, and he cannot with any enjoyment of himself live out of it. Whereas no custom can make the painfulness of a debauch easy or pleasing, since nothing can be pleasant that is unnatural. But now, if God has interwoven such a pleasure with the works of our ordinary calling, how much superior and more refined must that be, that arises from the survey of a well governed life ? Surely, as much as Christianity is nobler than a trade.

And then, for the constant freshness of it ; it is such a pleasure as can never cloy or overwork the mind ; for surely no man was ever weary of *thinking*, much less of thinking that he had done well or virtuously, that he had conquered such and such a temptation, or offered violence to any of his exorbitant desires. This is a delight that grows and improves under thought and reflection, and while it exercises, does also endear itself to the mind, at the same time employing and inflaming the meditations. All pleasures that affect the body must needs weary, because they transport ; and

all transportation is a violence, and no violence can be lasting, but determines upon the falling of the spirits, which are not able to keep up that height of motion that the pleasure of the senses raises them to ; and therefore how inevitably does an immoderate laughter end in a sigh ; which is only nature's recovering itself after a force done to it. But the religious pleasure of a well disposed mind, moves gently, and therefore constantly. It does not affect by rapture and ecstasy, but is like the pleasure of health, which is still and sober, yet greater and stronger than those that *call up* the senses and grosser and more affecting impressions. God has given no man a body as strong as his appetites ; but has corrected the boundlessness of his voluptuous desires, by stinting his strength, and contracting his capacities.

But to look upon those pleasures also, that have an higher object than the body ; as those that spring from honour and grandeur of condition ; yet we shall find, that even these are not so fresh and constant, but the mind can nauseate them, and quickly feel the thinness of a popular breath. Those that are so fond of applause while they pursue it, how little do they taste it when they have it ? Like lightning, it only flashes upon the face, and is gone, and it is well if it does not hurt the man. But for greatness of place, though it is fit and necessary that some persons in the world should be in love with a splendid servitude ; yet certainly they must be much beholden to their own fancy, that they can be pleased at it. For he that rises up early, and goes to bed late, only to receive addresses, to read and answer petitions, is really as much tied in his freedom, as he that waits all that time to present one. And what pleasure can it be to be incumbered with dependencies, thronged with petitioners ; and those perhaps sometimes all suitors for the same thing ; whereupon all but one will be sure to depart grumbling, because they miss of what they think their due ; and even that

one scarce thankful, because he thinks he has no more than his due. In a word, if it is a pleasure to be envied and shot at, to be maligned *standing*, and to be despised *falling*, to endeavour that which is impossible, which is to please all, and to suffer for not doing it; then is it a pleasure to be great, and to be able to dispose of men's fortunes and preferments.

But farther, to proceed from hence to yet an higher degree of pleasure, indeed the highest on this side that of religion, the pleasure of friendship and conversation. Friendship must confessedly be allowed the flower and crown of all temporal enjoyments. Yet has not this also its flaws and its dark side? For is not my friend a man; and is not friendship subject to the same mortality that men are? And in case a man loves, and is not loved again, does he not think that he has cause to hate as heartily, and ten times more eagerly, than ever he loved? And then *to be* an enemy, and once to *have been* a friend, does it not imbitter the rupture, and aggravate the calamity? But admitting that my friend continues so to the end; yet in the mean time, is he all perfection? Has he not *humours* to be endured, as well as *kindnesses* to be enjoyed? And am I sure to smell the rose, without sometimes feeling the thorn?

And then lastly for company; though it may *re-prieve* a man from his melancholy, yet it cannot secure him from his conscience, nor from sometimes being alone. And what is all that a man enjoys, from a week's, month's, or year's converse, comparable to what he feels for one hour, when his conscience shall take him aside, and rate him by himself?

In short, run over the whole circle of all earthly pleasures, and I dare affirm, that had not God secured a man a solid pleasure from his own actions, after he had rolled from one to another, and enjoyed them all, he would be forced to complain, that either they were not pleasures, or that pleasure was not satisfaction.

III. The third ennobling property of the pleasure that accrues to a man from religion, is, that it is such as is in no body's power, but only in his that has it; so that he who has the property may be also sure of the perpetuity; and tell me so of any outward enjoyment? We are generally at the mercy of men's rapine, avarice, and violence, whether we shall be happy or no. For if I build my felicity upon my estate or reputation, I am happy as long as the tyrant or the railer will give me leave to be so. But when my concernment takes up no more room or compass than myself; then so long as I know where to breathe, and to exist, I know also where to be happy; for I know I may be so in my own breast, in the court of my own conscience; where, if I can but prevail with myself *to be innocent*, I need bribe neither judge nor officer to be *pronounced* so. The pleasure of the religious man, is such an one as he carries about in his bosom, without alarming either the eye or envy of the world. A man putting all his pleasures into this one, is like a traveller's putting all his goods into one jewel; the value is the same, and the convenience greater.

There is nothing that can raise a man to that generous absoluteness of condition, as neither to cringe, to fawn, or to depend meanly, but that which gives him that happiness within himself, for which men depend upon others. For surely I need salute no great man's threshold, sneak to none of his friends or servants, to speak a good word for me to my conscience. It is a noble and a sure defiance of a great malice, backed with a great interest, which yet can have no advantage of a man, but from his own expectations of something that is without himself. But if I can make my duty my delight; if I can feast and caress my mind with worthy speculations or virtuous practices; let greatness and malice vex and abridge me if they can; my pleasures are as free as my will;

no more to be controlled than the unlimited range of my thoughts and desires.

Nor is this kind of pleasure only out of the reach of any outward violence, but even those things also that make a much closer impression upon us, which are the irresistible decays of nature, have yet no influence at all upon this. For when age itself, which, of all things in the world, will not be baffled, shall begin to remind us of our mortality, by aches, deadness of limbs, and dulness of senses; yet then the pleasure of the mind shall be in its full youth and freshness. A palsie may as well shake an oak, or a fever dry up a fountain, as either of them dry up or impair the delight of conscience. For it lies within, it grows into the very substance of the soul, so that it accompanies a man to his grave; he never outlives it, because he cannot outlive himself.

And thus I have endeavoured to describe the excellency of that *pleasure* that is to be found in the *ways* of a *Religious Wisdom*, by those excellent properties that do attend it; which, whether they reach the description that has been given them, or no, every man may convince himself, by the best of demonstrations, which is his own trial.

Now, from all this discourse, this I am sure is a most natural and direct consequence, that if the ways of *Religion* are ways of *pleasantness*, that such as are not so, are not truly and properly ways of *Religion*. Upon which ground it is easy to see what judgment is to be passed upon all those affected, uncommanded, absurd austerities, so much prized and exercised by some of the *Romish* profession. Pilgrimages, going barefoot, hair-shirts, and whips, with other such Gospel artillery, are their only helps to devotion; things never enjoined, either by the prophets under the *Jewish*, or by the apostles under the christian economy, who yet surely understood the proper and the most efficacious instruments of piety, as well as any confessor or friar of all the order of St. *Francis*, or any casuist whatsoever.

It seems, that with them a man sometimes cannot be a penitent, unless he also turns a vagabond, and foots it to *Jerusalem*, or wanders over this or that part of the world to visit the shrine of such or such a pretended saint, though perhaps, in his life, ten times more ridiculous than themselves. Thus, that which was *Cain's* curse, is become their Religion. He that thinks to expiate a sin by going barefoot, only makes one folly the atonement for another. *Paul* indeed was scourged and beaten by the *Jews*, but we never read that he beat or scourged himself; and if they think that his keeping under of his body imports so much, they must first prove, that the body cannot be kept under by a virtuous mind, and that the mind cannot be made virtuous but by a scourge, and consequently, that *thongs* and *whipcord* are means of grace, and things necessary to salvation. The truth is, if men's religion lies no deeper than their skin, it is possible that they may scourge themselves into very great improvements.

But they will find that *bodily exercise* touches not the soul; and that neither pride, lust, nor covetousness, nor any other vice, was ever mortified by corporeal disciplines. 'Tis not the *back*, but the *heart*, that must bleed for sin; and consequently, that in this whole course they are like men out of their way; let them lash on never so fast, they are not at all the nearer to their journey's end; and howsoever they deceive themselves and others, they may as well expect to bring a cart, as a soul to heaven by such means. What arguments they have to beguile poor, simple, unstable souls with, I know not; but surely the practical, casuistical, that is, the vital part of their religion, savours very little of spirituality.

And now upon the result of all, I suppose, that to exhort men to be religious, is only, in other words, to exhort them to take their pleasure; a pleasure high, rational, and angelical; embased with no appendant sting, no consequent loathing, no remorse, or bitter

farewells: but such an one, as being honey in the mouth, never turns to gall or gravel in the belly; a pleasure made for the soul, and the soul for that; suitable to its spirituality, and equal to all its capacities. Such an one as grows fresher upon enjoyment, and though continually fed upon, yet is never devoured; a pleasure that a man may call as properly his own, as his soul and his conscience; neither liable to accident, nor exposed to injury. It is the foretaste of heaven, and the earnest of eternity. In a word, it is such an one, as being begun in grace, passes into glory, blessedness, and immortality, and those pleasures *that neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive.*

DISCOURSE III.

FALSE FOUNDATIONS REMOVED.

MATTH. vii. 26, 27.

And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

It seems to have been all along the prime art of the great enemy of souls, not being able to root the sense of religion out of *men's hearts*, yet by his delusions to defeat the design of it upon *their lives*, and, either by empty notions or false persuasions, to take them off from the main business of religion, which is duty and obedience, by bribing the conscience to rest satisfied with something less; a project extremely suitable to the corrupt nature of man, whose chief, or rather sole quarrel to religion is the severity of its *precepts*, and the difficulty of their *practice*; so that, although it is as natural for him to desire to be happy as to breathe, yet he had rather miss of happiness than seek it in the way of holiness. Upon which account, nothing speaks so home to the very inmost desires of his soul, as those opinions, which would persuade him that it may be well with him hereafter, without any necessity of his

living well here ; which great *mystery of iniquity* being managed by the utmost skill of the tempter, and greedily embraced by a man's own treacherous affections, lies at the bottom of all *false religions*, and eats out the very heart and vitals of *the true*. For in the strength of this, some hope to be saved by *believing well* ; some by *meaning well* ; some by *paying well* ; and some by shedding a few insipid tears, and uttering a few hard words against those sins which they have no other controversy with, but that they were so unkind as to leave the sinner before he was willing to leave them. For all this men can well enough submit to, as not forcing them to abandon any one of their beloved lusts. And therefore they will not think themselves hardly dealt with, though you require *faith* of them, if you will but dispense with *good works*. They will abound and even overflow with good *intentions*, if you will allow them in quite contrary *actions*. And you shall not want for *sacrifice*, if that may *compound* for *obedience* ; nor lastly, will they grudge to find *money*, if some body else will find *merit*. But to *live well*, and to *do well*, are things of too hard a digestion.

Accordingly, our Saviour, who well knew all these false hopes and fallacious reasonings of the heart of man, which is never so subtle as when it would deceive itself, tells his hearers, that all these little, trifling inventions will avail them nothing ; and that in the great concern of *souls*, all that is short of a *good life* is nothing but trick and evasion, froth and folly ; and consequently that if they build upon such deceitful grounds, and with such slight materials, they can expect no other, than, after all their cost and pains, to have their house fall upon their heads, and so perish in the ruin. And with this terrible application he concludes his divine discourse from the mount.

The words of the text being too plain to need any nice explication, I shall manage the discussion of them in these four particulars ; in showing,

First, The reasons upon which I conclude *practice*, in the *great business* of a man's eternal happiness, to be the surest *foundation* to build upon.

Secondly, The *false foundations* upon which many build, and accordingly, in time of trial, miscarry.

Thirdly, The *causes* why such miscarry, and fall away in time of trial or temptation.

Fourthly, Wherein the fatal *greatness of their fall* consists.

And to show the reasons why *practice is the surest foundation*, (still supposing it bottomed upon the merits of Christ) *for a man to build his hopes of salvation upon*; I shall mention three.

First, Because, according to the ordinary economy of God's working upon the hearts of men, nothing but practice can change our corrupt nature; and practice continued, and persevered in, by the grace of God, will. We all acknowledge, (that is, all who are not wise above the articles of our church,) that there is an universal stain upon man's nature, that does incapacitate him for the fruition and pure converse of God; the removal of which cannot be effected, but by introducing the contrary habit of holiness, which shall by degrees purge out the other. And the only way to produce a habit is by the frequent repetition of congenial actions. Every pious action leaves a certain tincture, or disposition upon the soul, which being seconded by actions of the same nature, grows at length into an habit, or quality, of the force of a second nature.

I confess the habit of holiness, finding no principle of production in a nature wholly corrupt, must needs be produced by supernatural infusion, and consequently proceed, not from *acquisition*, but *gift*. It must be *brought into the soul*, it cannot *grow out of it*. But then we must remember that excellent rule of the schools, that *habitus infusi obtinentur per modum acquisitorum*. It is indeed a supernatural effect, but (as I may so speak) wrought in a natural way. The Spirit

of God, imitating the course of nature, even then, when it works something above it.

A person in the state of unregeneracy cannot, by the sole strength of his most improved performances, acquire an habit of true grace or holiness. But, as in the rain, it is not the bare water that fructifies, but a secret spirit, or nitre, descending with it, that has this virtue ; so in the duties of a meer natural man, there is sometimes a hidden, divine influence, that keeps pace with those actions, and together with each performance, imprints a holy disposition upon the soul, which, after a long series of the like actions, influenced by the same divine principle, comes at length to be of that force and firmness as to out-grow the contrary qualities of inherent corruption.

We have an illustration of this, though not a parallel instance, in natural actions, which by frequency imprint a permanent facility of acting upon the agent. Godliness is in some sense an art or mystery, and we all know that it is practice chiefly, that makes the artist.

Secondly, Action is the highest perfection, and drawing forth the utmost vigor and activity of man's nature. God is pleased to vouchsafe the best that *he can give*, only to the best that *we can do*. And action is undoubtedly our best, because the most difficult ; for, in such cases, worth and difficulty are inseparable companions. The properest and most raised conception that we have of God, is, that he is a *pure Act*, a perpetual Motion. And next to him, in the rank of beings, are the angels, as approaching nearest to him in this perfection, being all flame and agility, ministering spirits, always busy and upon the wing, for the execution of his great commands. And indeed *doing* is nothing else but the noblest improvement of *being*. It is not (as some nice speculators make it) an airy, diminutive entity, or accident, distinct from the substance of the soul ; but to define it more suitably to itself, and to the soul too, action is properly *the soul in its best posture*.

Thirdly, The main *drift* and *design* of religion is the active part of it. Profession is only the badge of a Christian, belief the beginning, but practice is the nature, and custom the perfection. For it is this, which translates Christianity from a bare notion into a real business ; from useless speculations into substantial duties ; and from an idea in the brain into an existence in the life. An upright conversation is the bringing of the general theorems of religion into the particular instances of solid experience ; and if it were not for this, religion would exist no where but in the Bible. The grand deciding question, at the last day, will be, not *What have you said ? or believed ?* but *What have you done more than others ?*

But that the very life of religion consists in practice, will appear yet further from those subordinate ends to which it is designed in this world, and which are as really, though not as principally, the purpose of it, as the utmost attainment of the beatific vision ; and these are two.

I. The honouring of God before the world. God will not have his worship, like his nature, invisible. Next to authority itself, is the manifestation of it ; and to be *acknowledged* is something more than to be *obeyed*. For what is sovereignty unknown, or majesty unobserved ? What glory were it for the sun to direct the affairs, if he did not also attract the eyes of the world ? It is his open and universal light, more than his occult influence, that we admire him for. Religion, if confined to the heart, is not so much entertained, as imprisoned ; that indeed is to be its fountain, but not its channel. The water arises in one place, but it streams in another ; and fountains would not be so much valued if they did not produce rivers.

One great end of religion is to publish God's sovereignty, and there is no such way to cause men to *glorify our heavenly Father*, as by *causing our light to shine before them* ; which, I am sure, it cannot do,

but as it beams through our good *works*. When a man leads a pious life, every hour he lives is virtually an act of worship. But if inward grace is not drawn forth into outward practice, men have no inspection into our hearts to discern it there. And let this be fixed upon as a standing principle, that it is not possible for us to honour God *before men*, but only by those acts of worship that are observable *by men*. It is our faith indeed that recognises *him for our God*, but it is our obedience only, that declares him to be *our Lord*.

II. The other end of religion in this world is the mutual advantage of mankind in the way of *society*. And herein did the admirable wisdom and goodness of God appear, that he was pleased to contrive such an instrument to *govern*, as might also *benefit*, the world. God planted religion amongst men as a *tree of life*; which, though it was to spring *upwards* directly to himself, yet it was to spread its branches to the benefit of *all below*.

There is hardly any necessity or convenience of mankind, but what is in a large measure served and provided for by this great *blessing* (as well as *business*) of the world, *Religion*. And he who is a Christian, is not only a better man, but also a better neighbour, a better subject, and a truer friend, than he that is not so. For was ever any thing more for the good of mankind, than to forgive injuries, to love and caress our mortal adversaries, and instead of our *enemy*, to hate only our *revenge*?

Of such a double, yet benign aspect, is Christianity, both to God and man; like incense, while it ascends to heaven, it perfumes all about it; at the same time both instrumental to God's worship, and the worshipper's refreshment: as it holds up one hand in supplication, so it reaches forth the other in benefaction.

But now, if it be one great end of religion thus to contribute to the benefit of society, surely it must needs

consist in the active piety of our lives, not in empty thoughts and fruitless persuasions. For what can one man be the better for what another thinks or believes? When a poor man begs an alms of me, can *I believe* my bread into his mouth, or my money into his hand? Believing, without doing, is a very cheap, and easy, but withal a very worthless way of being religious.

I now proceed to show *those false and sandy foundations* which *many venture to build upon, and are accordingly deceived by*; which, though they are exceedingly various, and, according to the multiplicity of men's tempers, businesses, and occasions, almost infinite, and like the sand mentioned in my text, not only *infirm*, but *numberless* also; yet according to the best of my poor judgment, I shall reduce them to these three heads.

The *First* of which is a *naked, unoperative faith*. Ask some upon what grounds they look to be saved, and they will answer, *because they firmly believe, that through the merits of Christ their sins are forgiven them*. But since it is hard for a man in his right wits to be confident of a thing which he does not at all know, such as are more cautious will tell you further, *that to desire to believe is to believe, and to desire to repent is to repent.* * * * * *

But because the poison of this opinion does so easily enter, and so strangely intoxicate, I shall presume to give an antidote against it in this one observation, namely, that all along the scripture, *where* justification is ascribed to faith alone, *there* the word *faith* is still used by a *metonymy* of the *antecedent* for the *consequent*, and does not signify abstractedly a meer persuasion, but the *obedience of a holy life performed in the strength of such a persuasion*. Not that this justifies *meritoriously* by any inherent worth in itself, but *instrumentally* as a condition appointed by God, upon the performance of which he freely imputes to us Christ's righteousness, which is the sole, proper, and formal cause of our justification.

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The *Second* false ground, which some build upon, is a fond *reliance upon the goodness of their heart, and the honesty of their intention*; a profitable and therefore a very prevailing fallacy, and such a one as the devil seldom uses but with success; it being one of his old and long experimented fetches, by the pretences of a *good heart*, to supplant the necessity of a *good life*. But to allege the honesty of the mind against the charge of an evil course, is a *protestation against the fact*, which does not excuse, but enhance its guilt. As it would look like a very strange and odd commendation of a tree to apologize for the *sourness* of its fruit, by pleading that all its *goodness* lay in the root.

But in the discourses of reason, such is the shortness of its reach, that it seldom suggests arguments *à priori* for any thing, but by an humble gradation creeps from the effects up to the cause, because these first strike the senses; and therefore St. James speaks as good philosophy as divinity when he says, *Show me thy faith by thy works*. Every action being the most lively portraiture of its efficient principle, as the *complexion* is the best comment upon the *constitution*; for in natural productions there is no hypocrisy.

Only we must observe here, that *good and evil* actions bear a very different relation to their respective principles. As it is between truth and falsehood in argumentation, so it is between good and evil in matters of practice. For though from an artificial contrivance of *false premises* may emerge a *true* conclusion, yet from true premises cannot ensue a false; so, though an evil heart may frame itself to the doing of an action in its kind good, yet a renewed, sanctified principle cannot of itself design actions really vicious. The reason of which is, because the former, in such a case, acts upon a principle of dissimulation; and no man by dissembling affects to appear worse than he is, but better. But all this while, I speak not of a single action,

but of a course of acting; for a pious man may do an evil action upon temptation or surprize, but not by the tenour of his standing principles. But when a man's sin is his business and the formed purpose of his life; and his piety shrinks only into *meaning* and *intention*; when he tells me *his heart* is right with God, while his *hand is in my pocket*, he upbraids my reason, and outfaces the common principles of natural discourse with an impudence equal to the absurdity.

This therefore, I affirm, that he who places his religion in his meaning, has fairly secured himself against a discovery in case he should have none, but yet, for all that, shall at the last find his portion with those who indeed have none. And the truth is, those who are thus intentionally pious, do in a very ill and untoward sense verify that philosophical maxim, that what they so much pretend to be *first* in their *intention*, is always *last* (if at all) in the *execution*.

The *Third* and last false ground I shall mention, upon which some men build to their confusion, is *party and singularity*. If an *implicit faith* be (as some say) the property of a *Roman catholic*, then, I am sure, popery may be found, where the name of papist is abhorred. For what account can some give of their religion, or of *that assurance of their salvation* (which they so much boast of) but that they have wholly resigned themselves up to the guidance of those who have the front and boldness to usurp the title of the *godly*. To be of such a party, of such a name, nay, of such a sneaking look, is to some the very spirit and characteristic mark of Christianity.

See what St. Paul himself built upon before his conversion to Christ: *I was after the strictest sect of our religion a Pharisee*. So that it was the reputation of the *sect*, upon which St. Paul then embarked his salvation. Now the nature of this fraternity we may learn from the origination of their name

Pharisee ; it being derived from פָּרָשׁ *parasch*, *separavit*, *discrevit*, whence in *Greek* they were called Ἀπαρισμένοι, *separati*. So that the words amount to this, that *St. Paul*, before he was a *Christian*, was a rigid *separatist*.

But singularity is not sincerity, though too often and mischievously mistaken for it ; and as an house built upon the sand is likely to be ruined by storms, so an house built out of the road is exposed to the invasion of robbers, and wants both the convenience and assistance of society. Christ is not therefore called the *corner stone in the spiritual building*, as if he intended that his church should consist only of *corners*, or be driven into them. There is a *by-path* as well as a *broad way* to destruction. And it both argues the nature, and portends the doom of *chaff*, upon agitation, to separate and divide from the wheat. But to such as venture their eternal interest upon such a bottom, I shall only suggest these two words.

1. That admitting, but not granting, that the party which they adhere to, may be truly pious ; yet the piety of the party cannot sanctify its proselytes. A church may be properly called holy, when yet that holiness does not diffuse itself to each member ; the reason of which is, because the whole may receive denomination from a quality inherent only in some of its parts. Company may occasion, but it cannot transfuse holiness.

No man's *righteousness*, but Christ's alone, can be imputed to another. To rate a man by the nature of his companions, is a rule, frequent indeed, but not infallible. *Judas* was as much a wretch amongst the apostles, as amongst the priests ; and therefore it is but a poor argument for a man to derive his saintship from the virtues of the society he belongs to, and to conclude himself no *weed*, only because he grows amongst the *corn*.

2. Such an adhesion to a party carries in it a strong tang of the rankest of all ill qualities, *spiritual pride*. There are two things natural almost to all men.

First. A desire of pre-eminence in any perfection, but especially religious. *Secondly.* A spirit of opposition or contradiction to such as are not of their own mind or way. Now both these are eminently gratified by a man's listing himself of a party in religion. And I doubt not but some are more really proud of the affected sordidness of a pretended mortification, than others of the greatest affluence and splendor of life; and that many, who call the execution of law *persecution*, do yet suffer it with an higher relish of pride, than others can inflict it. For it is not true zeal rising from an hearty concernment for religion, but an ill, restless, cross humour, which is provoked with smart, and quickened with opposition. The *godly party* is little better than a contradiction in the adjunct; for he who is truly godly, is humble and peaceable, and will neither make, nor be of a *party*, according to the common sense of that word. Let such pretenders therefore suspect the *sandiness* and *hollowness* of their foundation, and know, that such imitators of *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, build upon the same *ground* upon which they stood, and into which they sunk. And certainly that man's condition is very unsafe, who accounts his sin his perfection, and so makes the object of his repentance the ground of his salvation.

And thus I have discovered some of those false grounds, upon which many think themselves in the direct way to life and happiness, while God knows they are in the high and broad road to perdition.

Pass we now to show whence it is that such ill founded structures are, upon tryal, sure to fall. For the demonstration of which we must observe, that to the violent dissolution of any thing two things concur. *First*, an assault from without. *Secondly*, an inherent weakness within. One is the active, the other the passive principle of every change.

As for the first of these, *the opposition from without.* It comes from the *ὁ πονηρὸς*, the true common enemy, the

implacable, insatiable devourer of souls, the devil ; who will be sure to plant his engines of battery against every spiritual building which does but look towards heaven. The opposition he makes, our Saviour here emphatically describes by the *winds blowing*, the *rain descending*, and the *floods coming*, which is not an insignificant rhetorication of the same thing by several expressions, (like some pulpit bombast made only to measure an hour-glass,) but an exact description of those three methods, by which this assault of the devil prevails and becomes victorious.

First. It is *sudden* and *unexpected*. The devil usually comes upon the soul as he fell from heaven, like *lightning*. And he shows no small policy by his so doing ; for quickness prevents preparation, and so enervates opposition. It is observed of *Cæsar*, that he did *plurima & maxima bella solâ celeritate conficere* : so that almost in all his expeditions he seldom came to any place, but his coming was before the report of it. And we shall find, that the *Roman eagles* owed most of their great conquests as much to their *swiftness* as to their force. And the same is here the devil's method in his warfare against souls. Upon which account also the same character that *Tully* gave the forementioned *Cæsar* in his epistles to *Atticus*, may much more fitly agree to him, that he is *monstrum horribile celeritatis & vigilantiaë*. He flies to his prey, he fetches his blow quick and sure. He can shoot a temptation in a glance, and convey the poison of his suggestions quicker than the agitation of thought, or the strictures of fancy. It is the sudden trip in wrestling that fetches a man to the ground.

Thus *St. Peter*, that giant in faith, was shamefully foiled by a sudden, though weak assault. While he sits in the high priest's hall warming himself and thinking nothing, one confounds him with this quick unexpected charge, *Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee*. The surprize of the onset prevented his deliberating

powers from rallying together those succours of habitual grace, which, being alarmed by a more gradual approach of the temptation, would have easily repulsed it. But the devil will never caution the soul into a posture of defence, by presenting the temptation at a distance. He bites and shows his teeth at the same instant, and so prevents the *foresight* of the eye, by exceeding it in *quickness*.

Secondly. His assaults are *furious*. Temptations come very often, as the devil himself is said to do, in a *storm*. And a gust of wind, as it rises on a sudden, so it rushes with vehemence. And if the similitude does not yet speak high enough, to the violence of the storm the text adds the prevailing rage of a flood. And we know the tyranny of this element when it once embodies into a torrent, and runs with the united force of many waters; it scorns all confinement, and tears down the proudest opposition, as *Virgil* fully describes it:

“ ——— *Rapidus montano flumine torrens*

“ *Sternit agros, sternit sata læta, boûmq; labores,*

“ *Præcipitesq; trahit sylvas*——

With a parallel encounter does the devil draw upon the poor fortifications of *outward civility, good desires, imperfect resolutions*, and the like, which are no more able to abide the shock of such batteries, than a *morning dew* is able to bear the scorching sun; or than such little banks as children use to raise in sport, are able to stem the outrageous breaking in of the sea. Every temptation has this property of water, either to *insinuate*, or to *force its way*.

Thirdly. The devil in his assaults is *restless and importunate*. The *wind* is here said not only to *blow*, but emphatically to *beat* upon the house. And, as in a tempest the *blasts* are both *sudden and violent* in their onset, so they are frequent in their returns. Importunity is the only coercion that the will knows. Where the devil cannot persuade, he will, if he can,

even weary into a consent. It is often charging that wins the field. The tempter, if repulsed in a battle, will lengthen his assault into a siege. For the mind may have often a sudden heat of valour to repel the one, and yet not constancy to endure the other. A rejected proposal shall be reinforced with fresh supplies of more urgent and repeated persuasions.

See him thrice renewing the combat with our Saviour; and indeed after he has had the impudence to begin a temptation, it is always his prudence to pursue it. Otherwise, opposition only attempted, serves not for conquest, but admonition. His assaults are here said to come like *the rain*, and the rain never falls in one single drop; and yet if it did, even a *drop* would hollow and dig its way by frequency and assiduity.

It is observed by the learned *Verulam*, what advantage importunate men have over others, nay, even so as to prevail upon men of wisdom and resolution, because, as he excellently notes, *the wisest men have their weak times*. And then I infer, that he who is importunate at all times, must needs catch them at those.

So when the tempter continues his siege about a soul, he has all these advantages over it; as, to view its strong holds, and to spy where they are least fortified; to observe the cessations of duty; when devotion ebbs, and the spiritual guards draw off; when the affections revel, and slide into a posture of security; and then to renew the assault afresh, and so to force a victorious entrance for his temptations.

It is here, as with the *Greeks* before *Troy*; it was not their armies, nor their *Achilles*, but their *ten years' siege*, that got the conquest. What a violent flame cannot presently melt down, a constant, though a gentle heat, will at length exhale. It is our known duty to *resist the devil*; and we shall find that scarce any temptation ever encounters the soul without its *second*.

So then, you see here the first cause of this great

overthrow, namely, the *assault from without* by the tempter; which, in the next place, is rendered effectual by the *non-resistance* of the soul, that is so opposed; which peculiarly answers his threefold opposition with three contrary qualifications.

As, *First*, That it is frequently *unprepared*. The soul (God knows) is but seldom upon the watch; its spiritual armour is seldom buckled on. The business, the cares, and the pleasures of the world, draw it off from its own defence; business employs, care distracts, and pleasure lulls it asleep. And is this a posture to receive an enemy in? An enemy cunning, watchful, and malicious! An enemy who never sleeps, nor loiters, nor overlooks an advantage!

Secondly. As it is *unprepared*, so it is also *weak* and *feeble*. *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*. And such is the condition of man in this world, that much more of *flesh* than *spirit* goes to his constitution. Nay, is not grace itself described under the weakness of *smoking flax*, or a *bruised reed*? Of which how quickly is one extinguished, and how easily is the other broke!

Thirdly. As it is both *unprepared* and *weak*, so is it also *inconstant*. Peter *will* die for his Master at one time, and not many hours after deny and forswear him. Steadfastness is the result of strength, and how then can constancy dwell with weakness? The greatest strength of the mind is in its resolutions, and yet how often do they change! Even in the weightiest concerns, men too frequently *put them on and off* with their *clothes*. They deceive, when they are most trusted; suddenly starting, and flying in pieces like a *broken bow*; and like a bow again, even when strongest, they can hardly be kept always *bent*. We see what fair and promising beginnings some made: *They heard the word, they received it with joy, but having no root, believed only for a while, and so in time of temptation fell away*.

Constancy is the crowning virtue. *He who endureth to the end shall be saved.* But then constancy and perseverance are the gift of God, and above the production of mere nature ; it being no small paradox to imagine that where the stock itself is infirm, any thing which grows out of it should be strong.

And thus, having shown the *threefold impotence* of the soul, answerable to the *threefold opposition* made against it, what can we conclude? But that where *unpreparedness* is encountered with *unexpected force*, *weakness* with *violence*, *inconstancy* with *importunity*, there destruction must needs be, not the effect of chance, but nature, and, by the closest connexion of causes, unavoidable.

It now remains that we show, wherein the *greatness* of this *fall* consists. *The house fell, and great was the fall thereof.* In short, it may appear upon these two accounts.

First. That it is *scandalous*, and diffuses a contagion to others, and a blot upon religion. A falling house is a bad neighbour. It is the property of evil as well as good to be *communicative*. We still suppose the building here mentioned in the text to have had all the advantages of visible representment, all the pomp and flourish of external ornament, a stately superstructure, and a beautiful appearance ; and therefore such an one must needs perish as remarkably as it stood. That which is seen afar off, while it *stands*, is heard of much further when it *falls*.

An eminent professor is the concern of a whole profession. As to nonplus an *Aristotle* would look, not only like a slur to a particular philosopher, but like a baffle to philosophy itself.

The devil will let a man build high, that he may at length fetch him down with the greater shame, and so make even a Christian an argument against Christianity. The subduing of any soul is a conquest, but of such an one a triumph. A signal professor cannot per-

ish without a train, and in his very *destruction* his example is authentic.

Secondly. The greatness of the *fall*, here spoken of, appears also in this, that such an one is hardly and very rarely recovered. He, whose house falls, has not usually either riches or heart to build another. It is the business of a life once to build.

God indeed can cement the ruins, and heal the breaches of an apostate soul; but usually a shipwrecked faith and a deflowered conscience admit of no repair; like the present time, which, when once gone, never returns.

What may be within the secret of a decree, or the compass of extraordinary grace, is not here disputed. But as it would be arrogance for us men to define the *power* of grace, so is it the height of spiritual prudence to observe its *methods*. And upon such observation we shall find, that the recovery of such apostates is not the *custom*, but the *prerogative* of mercy.

A man is ruined but once. A miscarriage in the new birth is dangerous; and very fatal it generally proves to pass the critical seasons of a defeated conversion.

And thus I have at length despatched, what I at first proposed. Now the words themselves, being Christ's application of his own sermon, cannot be improved into a better, and consequently need not into another, except what their own natural consequence does suggest, and that is, that he who is about to build, *would first sit down and consider what it is like to cost him*. For building is chargeable, especially if a man lays out his money like a fool. Would a man build for eternity, that is, would he be saved? Let him consider with himself, what charges he is willing to be at, that he may be so. Nothing under an universal, sincere obedience to all the precepts of the gospel, can entitle him to the benefits of it; and thus *far* and *deep* he must go, if he will lay his foundation true. It is an

hard and a rocky work, I confess, but the difficulty of laying it will be abundantly recompensed by the firmness of it when it is laid.

But it is a sad and mortifying consideration to think upon what *whirlpools* and *quicksands* many venture to build. Some you shall have amusing their consciences with a set of fantastical new-coined phrases, such as *laying hold on Christ*, *getting into Christ*, and *rolling themselves upon Christ*, and the like ; by which, if they mean any thing else but obeying the precepts of Christ, and a rational hope of salvation thereupon, which, it is certain, that generally they do not mean, it is all but a *jargon* of empty, senseless metaphors ; and though many venture their souls upon them, despising *strict living* as mere *morality*, and perhaps as *popery*, yet being thoroughly looked into and examined, after all their noise, they are really nothing but *words* and *wind*.

Another flatters himself that he has lived in full *assurance of his salvation* for ten, or twenty, or perhaps thirty years ; that is, in other words, the man has been *ignorant* and *confident* very long.

Ay, but says another, I am a great *hearer* and *lover* of sermons, especially of *lectures*. And it is this which is the very delight of my *righteous soul*, and the main business of my life ; and though indeed, according to the good old *puritan custom*, I use to walk and talk out the prayers before the church-door, or without the *choir*, yet I am sure to be always in *at sermon*. Nay, I have so entirely devoted my whole time to the *hearing* of sermons, that, I must confess, I have hardly any left to *practise* them. And will not all this set me right for heaven ? Yes, no doubt, if a man were to be *pulled up to heaven by the ears* ; or the gospel would but reverse its rule, and declare, *that not the doers of the word, but the hearers only, should be justified*.

But then in comes a fourth, and tells us, that he is a saint of yet a higher class, as having got far above all their *mean, beggarly, steeple-house dispen-*

sations, by an happy exchange of them for the purer and more refined ordinances of the conventicle, where he is sure to meet with *powerful teaching* indeed, and to hear *will worship* and *superstition* run down, and the *priests of Baal* paid off, and the *follies* and *fopperies* of their *great idol*, the *Common Prayer*, laid open with a witness, (not without some *edifying flings* at the king and court too, sometimes,) by all which his *faith* is now grown so *strong*, that he can no more doubt of his going to heaven, than that there is such a place as heaven to go to.

So that if the conscience of such an one should at any time offer to grumble at him, he would presently stop its mouth with this, *that he is of such an one's congregation*; and then, *conscience, say thy worst*; or if the guilt of some old perjuries or extortions should begin to look stern upon him, why, then all those old scores shall be cleared off with a comfortable persuasion, *that such as he cannot fall from grace*, though it is shrewdly to be feared, that his only way of proving this must be, *that there can be no losing that which a man never had*.

But ah! thou poor, blind, *self-deluding and deluded soul*! Are these the best evidences thou hast for heaven? These the grounds upon which thou hopest for salvation? Assure thyself that God will deal with thee upon very different terms.

For he absolutely enjoins thee to do whatsoever Christ has commanded, and to avoid whatsoever he has forbidden. And Christ has commanded thee to *be poor in spirit, and pure in heart*. To subdue thy unruly appetites, to curb thy lust, and to suppress thy revenge. And if any thing proves an hindrance to thee in thy duty, though it be as dear as *thy right eye, to pluck it out*; and as useful as *thy right hand, to cut it off and cast it from thee*; he will have thee ready to endure persecutions and slanders, not only patiently, but also cheerfully, for the truth's sake.

He calls upon thee to *love thine enemies, and to do good for evil*; in all things, strictly to *do as thou wouldst be done by*; and not to cheat, lie, or overreach thy neighbour; and then call it *a fetching over the wicked, the better to enable thee to relieve the godly*. He will not allow thee to *resist evil*, and much less to *resist thy governor*. He commands thee to be charitable without vain-glory, and devout without ostentation; to be meek and lowly, chaste and temperate, just and merciful; and, in a word, (so far as the poor measures of humanity will reach,) *perfect, as thy heavenly Father is perfect*.

This is the sum of those divine sayings of our Saviour, which he himself refers to in my text, and which if a man *hears and does*, all the powers of hell shall never shake him. And nothing but a constant, impartial, universal practice of these will speak peace to thy conscience here, and stand between thee and the wrath of God hereafter. As for all other pretences, they are nothing but *death and damnation* dressed up in fair words and false shows; nothing but gins and traps for souls; contrived by the devil, and managed by such as the devil sets on work.

But I have done, and the result of all that I have said, or can say, is, that every spiritual builder would be persuaded to translate his foundation from the *sand* to the *rock*; and not presume upon Christ as his Saviour, till by a full obedience to his laws, he has owned him for his Sovereign. And this is properly to *believe in him*: this is truly to build upon a *Rock*; even that *Rock of Ages*, upon which, every one that wears the name of Christ, must by an inevitable dilemma either *build or split*.

DISCOURSE IV.

RELIGION THE BEST REASON OF STATE.*

1 KINGS, xiii. 33, 34.

After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places. Whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places. And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

JEROBOAM (from the name of a person become the character of impiety) is reported to posterity eminent, or rather infamous, for two things ; usurpation of government, and innovation of religion. 'Tis confessed, the former is expressly said to have been from God ; but since God may order what he does not approve, and use the wickedness of men while he forbids it, the design of the first cause does not excuse the malignity of the second ; and therefore the advancement of *Jeroboam* was in that sense only the work of God, in which it is said, *Amos iii. That there is no evil in the city which the Lord hath not done.* But from his attempts upon the civil power, he proceeds to innovate God's worship ; and from the subjection of men's bodies and estates, to enslave their consciences, as knowing that true religion is no friend to an unjust title. Such

[*The title applied to this discourse by its author, it was thought best to retain, though from its quaintness and brevity, somewhat obscure. Modern preachers would perhaps have styled it,—The public Maintenance of Religion, the truest Policy of the State.—ED.]

was afterwards the way of *Mahomet*, to the tyrant to join the imposter, and what he had got by the sword to confirm by the *Alcoran*; raising his empire upon two pillars, conquest and inspiration. *Jeroboam* being thus advanced, and thinking *policy* the best *piety*, though indeed in nothing ever more befooled; the nature of sin being not only to defile, but to infatuate. In the xith chapter he thus argues: *If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam, king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again unto Rehoboam, king of Judah.* As if he should have said; The true worship of God, and the converse of those that use it, dispose men to a considerate lawful subjection. And therefore I must take another course; my practice must not be better than my title; what was won by force, must be continued by delusion. Thus sin is usually seconded with sin; and a man seldom commits one sin to please, but he commits another to defend himself. *Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel!* As if he had made such an edict: *I Jeroboam, by the advice of my council, considering the great distance of the temple, and the great charges that poor people are put to in going thither; as also the intolerable burthen of paying the first fruits and tythes to the priest, have considered of a way that may be more easy to the people, as also more comfortable to the priests themselves, and therefore strictly enjoin, that none henceforth presume to repair to Jerusalem, especially since God is not tied to any place or form of worship; as also because the devotion of men is apt to be clogged by such ceremonies; therefore, both for the ease of the people, as well as for the advancement of religion, we command, that all henceforth forbear going up to Jerusalem.* Questionless

these and such other reasons, the impostor used, to insinuate his devout idolatry. And thus the calves were set up, to which oxen must be sacrificed; the god and the sacrifice out of the same herd. And because *Israel* was not to return to *Egypt*, *Egypt* was brought back to them; that is, the *Egyptian* way of worship, the *Apis* or *Serapis*, which was nothing but the image of a calf or ox, as is clear from most historians. Thus *Jeroboam* having procured his people *gods*, the next thing was to provide *priests*. Hereupon to the calves he adds a commission for the *approving*, *trying*, and *admitting* the rascality and lowest of the people to minister in that service; such as kept cattle, with a little change of their office, were admitted to make oblations to them. And doubtless, besides the approbation of these, there was a commission also to *eject* such of the priests and levites of God, as being too ceremoniously addicted to the temple, would not serve *Jeroboam*, before God, nor worship his calves for their gold, nor approve those two glittering sins for any reason of state whatsoever. Having now perfected divine worship, and prepared both gods and priests; in the next place, that he might the better teach his false priests the way of their new worship, he begins the service himself, and so countenances, by his example, what he had enjoined by his command. And *Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense*. Burning of incense was then the ministerial office amongst them, as preaching is now amongst us. So that to represent to you the nature of *Jeroboam's* action, it was, as if in a Christian nation the chief governor should encourage all the scum of the people to preach, and call them to the ministry by using to preach,* and invade the ministerial function himself. But *Jeroboam* rested not here, but while he was busy in his work, and a prophet immediately sent by God declares against his idolatry, *he held forth his hand*

* Cromwell (a lively copy of *Jeroboam*) did so.

from the altar, and said, Lay hold of him. Thus we have him completing his sin, and by a *strange imposition of hands* persecuting the *true* prophets, as well as ordaining false. But it was a natural transition, and no ways wonderful, to see him, who stood affronting God with false incense in the right hand, persecuting with the left, and abetting the idolatry of one arm with the violence of the other. Now if we lay all these things together, and consider the parts, rise, and degrees of his sin, we shall find, that it was not for nothing, that the Spirit of God so frequently and bitterly in scripture stigmatises this person; for it represents him, first inroaching upon the civil government, thence changing that of the church, debasing the office that God had made sacred; introducing a false way of worship, and destroying the true. And in this we have a full and fair description of a foul thing, that is, of an usurper and an impostor.

From the story and practice of *Jeroboam*, we might gather these observations.

1. *That God sometimes punishes a notorious sin, by suffering the sinner to fall into a worse.* 2. *There is nothing so absurd, but may be obtruded upon the vulgar under pretence of religion.* 3. *Sin, especially that of perverting God's worship, as it leaves a guilt upon the soul, so it perpetuates a blot upon the name.*

* * * * *

But I shall insist only upon the words of the text, and what shall be drawn from thence. There are two things in the words that may seem to require explication.

1. *What is meant by the high places.*

2. *What by the consecration of the priests.*

1. Concerning the high places. The use of these in the divine worship was general and ancient; and as *Dionysius Vossius* observes in his notes upon *Moses Maimonides*, the first way that was used, long before temples were either built, or thought lawful. The

reason of this seems to be, because those places could not be thought to shut up or confine the immensity of God, as they supposed an house did, and withal gave his worshippers a nearer approach to heaven by their height. Hence we read that the *Samaritans* worshipped upon mount *Gerizim*. And *Samuel* went up to the high place to sacrifice. And *Solomon* sacrificed at the high place in *Gibeon*. Yea, the temple itself was at length built upon a mount or high place. You will say then, why are these places condemned? I answer, that the use of them was not condemned as absolutely unlawful in itself, but only after the temple was built, and that God had professed to put his name in that place and no other. Therefore, what was lawful in the practice of *Samuel* and *Solomon*, before the temple was in being, was now detestable in *Jeroboam*, since that was constituted by God the only place for his worship. To bring this consideration to the times of Christianity: Because the primitive Christians preached in houses, and had only private meetings in regard they were under persecution, this cannot warrant the practice of those now-a-days, nor a toleration of them, that prefer houses before churches, and a conventicle before the congregation.

2. For the consecration of the priests; it seems to have been correspondent to ordination in the Christian Church. Idolaters themselves were not so far gone, as to venture upon the priesthood without consecration and a call. To show all the solemnities of this, would be tedious, and here unnecessary. The Hebrew word, which we render *to consecrate*, signifies *to fill the hand*, which indeed imports the manner of consecration, which was done by filling the hand: for the priest cut a piece of the sacrifice, and put it into the hands of him that was to be consecrated; by which ceremony he received right to sacrifice, and so became a priest. As our ordination in the Christian Church is said to have been heretofore transacted by the bishop's delivering of the

bible into the hands of him that was to be ordained, whereby he received power ministerially to dispense the mysteries contained in it, and so was made a presbyter. Thus much briefly concerning consecration.

There remains nothing else to be explained in the words. I shall therefore now draw forth the sense of them into these two propositions.

I. *The surest means to strengthen, or the readiest to ruin the civil power, is either to establish or destroy the worship of God in the right exercise of religion.*

II. *The next and most effectual way to destroy religion is to embase the dispensers of it.*

I. For the prosecution of the former we are to show, *First.* The Truth. *Second.* The Reason, of the assertion.

1. For the truth of it: It is abundantly evinced from all the records both of divine and prophane history, in which he that runs, may read the ruin of the state in the destruction of the church; and that not only portended by it, as its sign, but also inferred from it, as its cause.

2. For the reason of the point; it may be drawn,

(1.) From the judicial proceeding of God, the great King of kings, who for his commands is indeed careful, but for his worship jealous; and therefore, in states notoriously irreligious, by a secret and irresistible power, countermands their deepest project, splits their counsels, and smites their most refined policies with frustration and a curse; being resolved that the kingdoms of the world shall fall down before him, either in his adoration, or their own confusion.

(2.) The reason of the doctrine may be drawn from the necessary dependance of the very principles of government upon religion. And this I shall pursue more fully. The great business of government is to procure obedience, and keep off disobedience: the great springs upon which those two move, are rewards and punishments, answering the two ruling affections of man's mind, hope and fear. For since there is a

natural opposition between the judgment and the appetite, the former respecting what is *honest*, the latter what is *pleasing* ; which two qualifications seldom concur in the same thing, and since withal, man's design in every action is delight, therefore to render things honest also practicable, they must be first represented desirable, which cannot be but by proposing honesty clothed with pleasure ; and since it presents no pleasure to the sense, it must be fetcht from the apprehension of a future reward : for questionless duty moves not so much upon command as promise. Now therefore, that which proposes the greatest and most suitable rewards to obedience, and the greatest terrors and punishments to disobedience, doubtless is the most likely to enforce one and prevent the other. But it is religion that does this, which to happiness and misery joins eternity. And these, supposing the immortality of the soul, which philosophy indeed conjectures, but only religion proves, or, which is as good, persuades : I say these two things, eternal happiness and eternal misery, meeting with a persuasion that the soul is immortal, are, without controversy, of all others, the first the most desirable, and the latter the most horrible to humane apprehension. Were it not for these, civil government were not able to stand before the prevailing swing of corrupt nature, which would know no honesty but advantage, no duty but in pleasure, nor any law but its own will. Were not these frequently thundered into the understandings of men, the magistrate might enact, order, and proclaim ; proclamations might be hung upon walls and posts, and there they might hang, seen and despised, more like malefactors, than laws. But when religion binds them upon the conscience, conscience will either persuade or terrify men into their practice. For put the case, a man knew, and that upon sure grounds, thæ he might do an advantageous murder or robbery, and not be discovered ; what humane laws could hinder him, which, he knows,

cannot inflict any penalty where he can make no discovery? But religion assures him, that no sin, though concealed from humane eyes, can either escape God's sight in this world, or his vengeance in the other. Put the case also, that men looked upon death without fear, in which sense it is nothing, or at most very little; ceasing while it is endured, and probably without pain, for it seizes upon the vitals, and benumbs the senses, and where there is no sense there can be no pain. I say, if while a man is acting his will towards sin, he should also thus act his reason to despise death, where would be the terror of the magistrate, who can neither threaten or inflict more? Hence an old malefactor in his execution, at the gallows made no other confession but this, that he had very jocundly passed over his life in such courses, and he that would not for fifty years' pleasure endure half an hour's pain, deserved to die a worse death than himself. Questionless this man was not ignorant before, that there were such things as laws, assizes, and gallows; but had he considered the terrors of another world, he might probably have found a fairer passage out of this. If there was not a minister in every parish, you would quickly find cause to increase the number of constables; and if the churches were not employed to be places to hear God's law, there would be need of them to be prisons for the breakers of the laws of men. Hence 'tis observable, that the tribe of *Levi* had not one place or portion together like the rest of the tribes. But because it was their office to dispense religion, they were diffused over all the tribes, that they might be continually preaching to the rest their duty to God, which is the most effectual way to dispose them to obedience to man; for he that truly fears God, cannot despise the magistrate. Yea, so near is the connexion between the civil state and religious, that heretofore, if you look upon well regulated, civilized heathen nations, you will find the government and the priesthood united in the same per-

son: *Anius, rex idem hominum, Phœbique sacerdos.*
Æn. III. If, under the true worship of God, Melchisedech, king of Salem, and priest of the most high God, Hebr. vii. And afterwards Moses, (whom as we acknowledge a pious, so *atheists* themselves will confess to have been a wise prince,) he, when he took the *kingly government* upon himself, by his own choice, seconded by divine institution, vested the *priesthood* in his brother *Aaron*, both whose concerns were so coupled, that if nature had not, yet their religions, nay, their civil interests would have made them brothers. And it was once the design of the emperor of *Germany*, *Maximilian* the First, to have joined the popedom and the empire together, and to have got himself chosen pope, and by that means derived the papacy to succeeding emperors. Had he effected it, doubtless there would not have been such scuffles between them and the bishop of Rome. And to see, even amongst us, how these two are united; the magistrate sometimes cannot do his own office dexterously, but by acting the minister. Hence it is, that judges of assizes find it necessary in their charges to use *pathetical discourses of conscience*; and if it were not for the sway of this, they would often lose the best evidence in the world against malefactors, which is confession; for no man would confess and be hanged here, but to avoid being damned hereafter. Thus I have in general shown the utter inability of the magistrate to attain the ends of government, without the aid of religion. But it may be here replied, that many are not at all moved with arguments drawn from the happy or miserable state of the soul after death; and therefore this avails little to procure obedience, and consequently to advance government. I answer by concession, that this is true of *epiours, atheists, and some pretended philosophers*, who have stifled the notions of Deity, and the soul's immortality; but the unprepossessed on the one hand, and the well disposed on the other, who

together make much the major part of the world, are affected with a due fear of these things. * * * * And whatsoever conscience makes the generality obey, to that prudence will make the rest conform.

Wherefore, having proved the dependence of government upon religion, I shall now demonstrate, that the safety of government depends upon the truth of religion. False religion is, in its nature, the greatest bane to government in the world ; because whatsoever is false, is also weak. And so much as any religion has of falsity, it loses of strength and existence. And what prejudice this would be to the civil government, is apparent, if men should be awed into obedience, and affrighted from sin by rewards and punishments, proposed to them in such a religion, which afterwards should be detected, and found a mere cheat. And men will then not only cast off obedience to the civil magistrate, but they will do it with disdain and rage, that they have been deceived so long ; for though men are often willingly deceived, yet still it must be under an opinion of being instructed ; though they love the deception, yet they mortally hate it under that appearance. Therefore it is no ways safe for a magistrate, who is to build his dominion upon the fears of men, to build those fears upon a false religion. 'Tis not to be doubted, but the absurdity of *Jeroboam's* calves made many *Israelites* turn subjects to *Rehoboam's* government, that they might be proselytes to his religion. Herein the weakness of the *Turkish* religion appears, that it urges obedience upon the promise of such absurd rewards, as, that after death they should have palaces, gardens, beautiful women, with all the luxury that could be : as if those things, that were the occasions and incentives of sin in this world, could be the rewards of holiness in the other ; besides many other inventions, that are like so many chinks and holes to discover the rottenness of the whole fabrick, when God shall be pleased to give light to open their reasons to discern them. But you

will say, What government more sure and absolute than the *Turkish*, and yet what religion more false? Therefore, certainly government may stand sure and strong, be the religion professed never so absurd. I answer, that it may do so indeed by accident, through the strange peculiar temper and gross ignorance of a people; as we see it happens in the *Turks*, the best part of whose policy, supposing the absurdity of their religion, is this, that they prohibit schools of learning. But suppose we, that the learning of these western nations were as great there as here, and the *Alcoran* as common to them as the *Bible* to us, that they might have free recourse to examine the flaws and follies of it; and withal, that they were of as inquisitive a temper as we; and who knows, but as there are vicissitudes in the government, so there may happen the same also in the temper of a nation? If this should come to pass, where would be their religion? And then let every one judge whether the *arcana imperii* and *religionis* would not fall together. They have begun to totter already; for *Mahomet* having promised to come and visit his followers, and translate them to paradise after a thousand years, this being expired, many of the *Persians* began to doubt and smell the cheat, till the *mufti*, or chief priest, told them that it was a mistake in the figure, and assured them, that upon more diligent survey of the records, he found it two thousand instead of one. When this is expired, perhaps they will not be able to renew the fallacy. I say therefore, that though this government continues firm in the exercise of a false religion, yet this is through the present genius of the people, which may change; but this does not prove, but that the nature of such a religion, (of which we only now speak) tends to subvert the civil power. Hence *Machiavel* himself, in his animadversions upon *Livy*, makes it appear, that the weakness of *Italy*, which was once so strong, was caused by the corrupt practices of the papacy, in depraving religion

to that purpose, which he, though himself a papist, says, could not have happened, had the Christian religion been kept in its native simplicity.

The inferences from hence are two.

1. If government depends upon religion, then this shows the pestilential design of those that attempt to disjoin the civil and ecclesiastical interest, setting the latter wholly out of the tuition of the former. But 'tis clear that the fanatics know no other step to the magistracy, but through the ruin of the ministry. There is a great analogy between the body natural and politick ; in which the ecclesiastical part justly supplies the part of the soul, and the violent separation of this from the other does as certainly infer death, as the disjunction of body and soul in the natural : for when this once departs, it leaves the body of the commonwealth a carcass, noisome, and exposed to be devoured by birds of prey. The ministry will be one day found, according to Christ's word, *the salt of the earth*, the only thing that keeps societies of men from stench and corruption. These two interests are of that nature, that 'tis to be feared they cannot be divided, but they will also prove opposite ; and not resting in a bare diversity, quickly rise into a contrariety. These two are to the state, what the elements of fire and water are to the body, which united, compose ; separated, destroy it. I am not of the papist's opinion, who would make the spiritual above the civil state in power as well as dignity, but rather subject it to the civil ; yet thus much I dare affirm, that the civil, which is superior, is upheld and kept in being by the ecclesiastical and inferior ; as it is in a building where the upper part is supported by the lower ; the church resembling the foundation, which indeed is the lowest part, but the most considerable. The magistracy cannot so much protect the ministry, but the ministers may do more in serving the magistrate. A taste of which truth you may take from the holy war, to which how fast did

men go, when the priest persuaded them, that whosoever died in that expedition was a martyr? Those that will not be convinced what a help this is to the magistracy, would find how considerable it is, if they should chance to clash; this would certainly eat out the other. For the magistrate cannot urge obedience upon such potent grounds, as the minister, if so disposed, can urge disobedience. As for instance, if my governor should command me to do a thing, or I must die, or forfeit my estate; and the minister steps in, and tells me, that I ruin my soul if I obey, it's easy to see a greater force in this persuasion from the advantage of its ground. And if divines once begin to curse *Meroz*, we shall see that *Levi* can use the sword as well as *Simeon*; and although ministers do not handle, yet they can employ it. This shows the danger of the civil magistrate's exasperating those that can fire men's consciences against him, and arm his enemies with religion. For I have read heretofore of some, that having conceived an irreconcilable hatred of the civil magistrate, prevailed with men so far, that they went to resist him even out of conscience, and a full persuasion that, not to do it, *were to desert God and to incur damnation*. Now when men's rage is both heightened and sanctified by conscience, the war will be fierce. And then *Campagna's* speech to the king of *Spain* will be found true, *religio semper vicit, præsertim armata*. Which sentence deserves seriously to be considered by all governors, and timely to be understood lest it comes to be felt.

2. If the safety of government is founded upon the truth of religion, then this shows the danger of any thing that may make even the true religion suspected to be false. To be false, and to be thought false, is all one in respect of men, who act not according to truth, but apprehension. As on the contrary, a false religion, while apprehended true, has the force of

truth. Now there is nothing more apt to induce men to a suspicion of any religion, than frequent change : For since the object of religion, God ; the subject of it, the soul of man ; and the business of it, truth, is always one and the same ; variety and novelty is a just presumption of falsity. It argues distemper in the mind, as well as in the body, when a man is continually tossing from one side to the other. The wise *Romans* ever dreaded the least innovation in religion. Hence we find the advice of *Mecænas* to *Augustus Cæsar*, in *Dion Cassius*, where he counsels him to persecute all innovators of divine worship, not only as contemners of the gods, but as the most pernicious disturbers of the state. For when men venture to make changes in things sacred, it argues great boldness with God, and this naturally imports little belief of him ; which, if the people once perceive, they will take their creed also, not from the magistrate's laws, but his example. Hence in *England*, where religion has been still *purifying*, and hereupon almost always in the *fire* and the *furnace*, irreligious persons have took no small advantage from our changes. For in king *Edward* the sixth's time, the divine worship was twice altered in two new liturgies. In the first of queen *Mary*, the protestant religion was persecuted with fire and faggot, by law and public counsel of the same persons, who had so lately established it. Upon the coming in of queen *Elizabeth*, religion was changed again, and within a few days the public council of the nation made it death for a priest to convert any to that religion, which before with so much zeal had been restored. So that it is observed, that in the space of twelve years there were four changes about religion made in *England*, and that by the public council of the realm, which were more than were made by any Christian state throughout the world, so soon one after another, in the space of fifteen hundred years before. Hence it is, that the enemies of God take occasion to blaspheme, and call

our religion *statism*. And now adding to the former, those many changes that have happened since, I am afraid we shall not so easily claw off that name; nor, though we may satisfy our own consciences in what we profess, be able to repel the objections of the rational world about us, which not being interested in our changes, will not judge of them as we judge, but debate them by reason, by the nature of the thing, the practice of the church; against which, *new lights, sudden impulses of the spirit, extraordinary calls*, will be but weak arguments to prove any thing but the madness of those that use them, and that the church must needs wither, being *blasted* with such *inspirations*. And indeed when changes are so frequent, it is not properly religion, but fashion.

II. *The next and most effectual way to destroy religion, is to embase the dispensers of it.* In the handling of this I shall show,

First, How the dispensers of religion are embased. *Second*, How the embasing them is a means to destroy religion.

1. For the first of these, the dispensers of the word are rendered base two ways:

(1.) By divesting them of all temporal advantages, as inconsistent with their calling. It is strange, since the priest's office heretofore was always splendid, and almost regal, that it is now looked upon as a piece of religion to make it low and sordid. So that the use of the word *minister* is brought down to the literal signification of it, *a servant*. But in the Old Testament, the same word signifies a *priest*, and a *prince*, or *chief ruler*. Gen. xli. 45. Exod. iii. 1. Isa. xxiv. 2. Junius and Tremellius render all these places, not by *sacerdos*, priest, but by *præses*, that is, a prince, or at least a minister of state. And it is strange, that the name should be the same, when the nature of the thing is so exceeding different. The like also may be observed in other languages, that the most illus-

trious titles are derived from things sacred. *Σεβαςός* was the title of the Christian *Cæsars*, correspondent to the *Latin Augustus*, and it is derived from *σέβασμα*, *cultus, res sacra*. And it is usual in our language to make *sacred* an epithet to *majesty*; there was a certain royalty in things sacred. Hence the apostle, who, I think, was no enemy to the simplicity of the gospel, speaks of a *royal priesthood*. In old time, before the placing this office only in the line of *Aaron*, the head of the family, and the first born offered sacrifice for the rest; that is, was their priest. And we know, that such rule and dignity belonged at first to the masters of families, that they had *jus vitæ & necis*, power of life and death in their own family; and hence was derived the beginning of kingly government; a king being only a civil head of a politick family, the whole people; so that we see the same was the foundation of the royal and sacerdotal dignity. As for the dignity of this office among the *Jews*, it is so pregnantly set forth in holy writ, that it is unquestionable. Kings and priests are still mentioned together, *Lam. ii. 6. The Lord hath despised, in the indignation of his anger, the king and the priest, Hos. v. 2. Hear, O priests, and give ear, O house of the king.* Hence *Paul*, together with a blow, received this reprehension, *Revilest thou God's high priest?* And *Paul*, in the next verse, does not defend himself, by pleading an extraordinary motion of the Spirit, or that he was sent to reform the church, and might therefore lawfully vilify the priesthood; but he makes an excuse, and that from ignorance, the only thing that could take away the fault, and subjoins a reason which farther advances the truth here defended: *For it is written, thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.* To holy writ we might add the testimony of *Josephus*, of next authority to it in things concerning the *Jews*, who in sundry places of his history sets forth the dignity of the priests. * * * * To the *Jews* we may

join the *Egyptians*, the first masters of learning and philosophy. * * * * Next, we may take a view of the practice of the *Romans*: *Numa Pompilius*, who civilized the fierce *Romans*, is reported in *Livy*, sometimes to have performed the priest's office himself. *Tum sacerdotibus creandis animum adjecit, quanquam ipse plurima sacra obibat*; but when he made priests, he gave them a dignity almost the same with himself. And this honour continued together with the valour and prudence of that nation: For the success of the *Romans* did not extirpate their religion; the college of the priests being in many things exempted even from the jurisdiction of the senate. Hence *Juvenal* mentions the priesthood of *Mars*, as one of the most honorable places in *Rome*. And *Jul. Cæsar*, who was chosen priest in his private condition, thought it not below him to continue the same office when he was created absolute governor of *Rome*, under the name of perpetual dictator. Add to these the practice of the *Gauls* mentioned by *Cæsar*, (*de Bello Gallico*,) where he says of the *Druides*, who were their priests, that they did judge *de omnibus ferè controversiis publicis privatisque*. See also *Homer* in the *Iliad* representing *Chryses*, priest of *Apollo*, with his golden sceptre, as well as his golden censer. But why have I produced all these examples of the heathens? Is it to make these a ground of our imitation? No, but to show that the giving honour to the priesthood was a custom universal amongst all civilized nations. And whatsoever is universal, is also natural, as not founded upon compact, or the humours of men, but the native results of reason; and that which is natural neither does nor can oppose religion. But you will say, this concerns not us, who have an express rule revealed. Christ was himself poor and despised, and withal has instituted such a ministry. To the first part of this plea I answer, that Christ came to suffer, yet the sufferings of Christ do not oblige all Christians to undertake the like. For

the second, that the ministry of Christ was low, by his institution, I utterly deny. It was so, indeed, by the persecution of the heathen princes, but what does this argue for a low, dejected ministry in a flourishing state, which professes to encourage Christianity? But to dash this cavil, read but the practice of Christian emperors down from the time of *Constantine*, in what respect and splendor they treated the ministers; and then let our adversaries produce their puny, pitiful arguments for the contrary, against the general, clear, current of all antiquity. As for two or three little countries about us, the learned and impartial will not value their practice; in one of which places the minister has been seen, for mere want, to mend shoes on the *Saturday*, and been heard to preach on the *Sunday*. In the other place, stating the several orders of the citizens, they place their ministers after their apothecaries; that is, the physician of the soul after the drugster of the body; a fit practice for those who, if they were to rank things as well as persons, would place their religion after their trade.

And thus much concerning the first way of embasing the ministers and ministry.

(2.) By admitting sordid, illiterate persons to this function. This is to give the royal stamp to a piece of lead. I confess, God has no need of any man's parts or learning; but certainly then, he has much less need of his ignorance and ill behaviour. It is a sad thing, when all other employments shall empty themselves into the ministry; when men shall repair to it, not for preferment, but refuge; like malefactors flying to the altar, only to save their lives; or like those of *Eli's* race, that should come crouching, and seek to be put in the priest's office that they might eat a piece of bread. Heretofore there was required splendor of parentage to recommend any one to the priesthood, as *Josephus* witnesses in a treatise which he wrote of his own life; where he says, to have right to deal in

things sacred, was, amongst them, accounted an argument of a noble descent. God would not accept the offals of other professions. Doubtless many rejected Christ upon this thought, that he was the *carpenter's* son, who would have embraced him, had they known him to have been the Son of David. The preferring undeserving persons to this great service, was eminently *Jeroboam's* sin, and how *Jeroboam's* practice and offence has been continued amongst us in another guise, is not unknown; for has not learning unqualified men for approbation to the ministry? Have not parts and abilities been reputed enemies to grace, and qualities no ways ministerial? While *friends, faction, well-meaning* and *little understanding*, have been accomplishments beyond study and the university; and to falsify a story of conversion, beyond pertinent answers and clear resolutions to the hardest questions. So that matters have been brought to this pass, that if a man amongst his sons had any blind, or disfigured, he laid him aside for the ministry; and such an one was presently approved, as having a *mortified countenance*. In short, it was a fiery furnace, which often approved dross, and rejected gold. But thanks be to God, those *spiritual wickednesses* are now discharged from *their high places*. Hence it was, that many rushed into the ministry, as being the only calling, that they could profess without serving an apprenticeship. Hence also we had those that could preach sermons, but not defend them. The reason of which is clear, because the works of learned men might be borrowed, but not the abilities. Had indeed the old levitical hierarchy still continued; in which it was part of the ministerial office to flay the sacrifices, to cleanse the vessels, to scour the flesh-forks, to sweep the temple, and carry the filth and rubbish to the brook *Kidron*, no persons living had been fitter for the ministry, and to serve in this nature at the altar. But since it is made a labour of the mind; as to inform men's judgments, and move

their affections, to resolve difficult places of scripture, to clear off controversies ; I cannot see how to be a butcher, scavenger, or any other such trade, does at all prepare men for this work. But as unfit as they were, yet to clear a way for such into the ministry, we have had almost all sermons full of gibes at human learning. Away with *vain philosophy, the disputer of this world, the enticing words of man's wisdom*, and set up the *foolishness of preaching, the simplicity of the gospel*. Thus divinity has been brought in upon the ruins of humanity ; by forcing the words of the scripture from the sense, and then haling them to the worst of drudgeries, to set a *jus divinum* upon ignorance, and recommend natural weakness for supernatural grace. Here-upon the ignorant have took heart to venture upon this great calling, and instead of cutting their way to it, according to the usual course, through the knowledge of the *tongues*, the study of philosophy, school divinity, the fathers and councils, they have taken a shorter cut, and having read perhaps a Treatise or two upon the *Heart, the Bruised Reed, the Crumbs of Comfort, Wollebius in English*, and some other little authors, the usual furniture of old women's closets, they have set forth as accomplished divines, and forthwith they present themselves to the service ; and there have not been wanting *Jeroboams* as willing to receive them, as they to offer themselves.

And this may suffice concerning the second way of embasing God's ministers ; so that what *Solomon* speaks of a proverb in the mouth of a fool, may be said of the ministry vested in them, that it is like a *pearl in a swine's snout*.

2. I proceed now to show, how the embasing of the ministers tends to the destruction of religion. This is two ways.

(1.) Because it brings them under exceeding contempt ; and then, let none think religion itself secure : For the vulgar have not such logical heads, as to be

able to abstract the man from the minister, or to consider the same person under a double capacity, and so honour him as a divine, while they despise him as poor. But suppose they could, yet every act of contempt strikes at both, and unavoidably wounds the ministry through the sides of the minister. * * * * * Meanness of condition exposes the wisest to scorn, it being natural for men to place their esteem rather upon things great than good; and the poet observes, that this *infelix paupertas* has nothing in it more intolerable than this, that it renders men ridiculous. And then, how easy it is for contempt to pass from the person to the office, experience proves; counsel being seldom valued so much for the truth of the thing, as the credit of him that gives it. Observe an excellent passage to this purpose, in *Eccles. ix.* We have an account of a little city, with few men in it, besieged by a great king, and we read, that *there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city*; a worthy service indeed, and certainly we may expect that some honourable recompense should follow it; a deliverer of his country, and that in such distress, could not but be advanced. But we find a contrary event in the next words; *yet none remembered that same poor man.* Why, what should be the reason? Was he not a man of parts and wisdom, and is not wisdom honourable? Yes, but *he was poor.* But was he not also successful, as well as wise? True; but still *he was poor.* And once grant this, and you cannot keep off that unavoidable sequel, *The poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.* We may believe it upon *Solomon's* word, who was rich, as well as wise, and therefore knew the force of both: and probably had it not been for his riches, the queen of *Shebu* would never have come so far only to have heard his wisdom. Observe her behaviour when she came. Though upon the hearing of *Solomon's* wisdom, and the resolution of her hard questions, she expressed a just admiration;

yet when *Solomon* afterwards showed her his palace, his treasures, and the temple which he had built, it is said, *there was no more spirit in her*. What was the cause of this? Certainly, the magnificence and splendor of such a structure. It struck her into an ecstasy beyond his wise answers. She esteemed this as much above his wisdom, as astonishment is beyond bare admiration. She admired his wisdom, but she adored his magnificence. So apt is the mind, even of wise persons, to be surprized with the superficies of things, and value or undervalue spirituals, according to their external appearance. When circumstances fail, the substance seldom long survives; clothes are no part of the body, yet take away clothes, and the body will die. *Livy* observes of *Romulus*, that being to give laws to his new *Romans*, he found no better way to procure reverence to them, than by first procuring it to himself by splendor of habit and retinue, and other signs of royalty. And the wise *Numa*, his successor, took the same course to enforce his religious laws, namely, by giving the same pomp to the priest, who was to dispense them. *Sacerdotem creavit, insignique eum veste & curuli regiâ sellâ adornavit*. And in our judicatures, take away the trumpet, the scarlet, the attendance, and the lordship, which would be to make justice naked, as well as blind; and the law would lose much of its terror, and consequently of its authority. Let the minister be abject, the word will suffer for his sake: The message will still find reception according to the dignity of the messenger. Imagine an ambassador presenting himself in a poor frize jerkin and tattered clothes, certainly he would have but small audience. * * * * It will fare alike with the ambassadors of Christ, the people will give them audience according to their presence. A notable example of which we have in the behaviour of some to *Paul* himself, 2 *Cor.* x. 10. Hence in the *Jewish* church it was cautiously provided, that none that was *blind* or *lame*, or had any

remarkable defect in his body, was capable of the priestly office; because these things naturally make a person contemned, and this presently reflects upon the function. This therefore is the first way by which the low condition of the ministers tends to the destruction of the ministry.

(2.) Because it discourages men of fit parts from undertaking it. And certain it is, that as the calling dignifies the man, so the man much more advances his calling. And how often a good cause may miscarry without a wise manager, and the *faith* for want of a *defender*, is, or at least may be known. 'Tis not the truth of an assertion, but the skill of the disputant, that keeps off a baffle; not the justness of a cause, but the valour of the soldiers that must win the field. When a learned *Paul* was converted, and undertook the ministry, it stopped the mouths of those that said, none but poor, weak fishermen preached Christianity; and so his learning silenced the scandal, as well as strengthened the church. Religion, placed in a soul of exquisite abilities, as in a castle, finds not only habitation, but defence. And what a learned* foreign divine said of the *English* preaching, may be said of all, *plus est in artifice, quàm in arte*. So much of moment is there in the professors of any thing, to depress or raise the profession. What is it that kept the church of *Rome* strong and flourishing for so many *centuries*, but the happy succession of the choicest wits engaged to her service by suitable preferments? And what strength, do we think, would that give to the true religion, that is able thus to establish a false? Religion in a great measure stands or falls according to the abilities of those that assert it. And if, as some observe, men's *desires* are usually as large as their abilities, what course have we took to allure the former, that we might engage the latter to our assistance? But we have took all ways to affright *scholars* from look-

* Gaspar Stresio.

ing towards this *sacred calling*. For will men lay out their *wit* and *judgment* upon that employment, for the undertaking of which, both will be questioned? Would men, not long since, have spent toilsome days and watchful nights, in the *quest of knowledge* preparative to this work, at length to come and dance attendance for approbation, upon a *junto* of petty *tyrants*, who denied fitness from learning, and grace from morality? Will a man exhaust his livelihood upon *books*, and his health, the best part of his life, upon *study*, to be at length thrust into a *poor village*, where he shall have his due precariously, and intreat for his own; and when he has it, live *poorly* and *contemptibly* upon it, while the same or less labour, bestowed upon any other calling, would bring not only maintenance but abundance? 'Tis, I confess, the duty of ministers to endure this condition; but neither religion nor reason does oblige either them to approve, or others to choose it. Doubtless, parents will not throw away the towardness of a *child*, and the expense of education, upon a profession, the labour of which is increased, and the rewards of which are vanished. To condemn promising, lively parts to contempt and penury in a despised *calling*, what is it else but the casting of a *Moses* into the mud, or offering a *son* upon the *altar*; and instead of a *priest* to make him a *sacrifice*? Neither let any here reply, that it becomes not a *ministerial spirit* to undertake such a *calling* for *reward*; for they must know that it is one thing to *undertake* it for a *reward*, and not to be willing to undertake it without one.

* * * * But besides, suppose it were the duty of *scholars* to choose this *calling* in the midst of all *discouragements*; yet a prudent governor, who knows it to be his *wisdom* as well as his *duty*, to take the best course to advance religion, will not consider men's duty, but their practice; not what they ought to do, but what they use to do; and therefore draw over the

best qualified to his *service*, by such ways as are most apt to persuade and induce men. *Solomon* built his temple with the *tallest cedars*; and surely, when God refused the *defective* and the *maimed* for *sacrifice*, we cannot think that he requires them for the *priesthood*. When *learning*, *abilities*, and what is excellent in the world, forsake the church, we may easily foretell its ruin, without the gift of prophecy. And when *ignorance* succeeds, we may be sure, *heresy* and *confusion* will quickly come in the room of religion. For undoubtedly there is no way so effectual to betray the truth, as to procure it a weak defender.

Well now, let us make a brief recapitulation of the whole. Government, we see, depends upon religion, and religion upon the encouragement of those that are to dispense and assert it. For the farther evidence of which truths, we need not travel beyond our own borders; but leave it to every one impartially to judge, whether from the very first day that our religion was unsettled, and church government flung out of doors, the civil government has ever been able to fix upon a sure foundation. We have been changing even to a proverb. The *indignation of heaven* has been rolling and turning us from one form to another, till at length such a giddiness seized upon the *government*, that it fell into the very dregs of sectaries, who threatened an equal ruin both to *minister* and *magistrate*; and how the state has sympathized with the church, is apparent. For have not our *princes*, as well as our *priests*, been of the lowest of the people? Have not *coblers*, *draymen*, *mechanics*, governed, as well as *preached*? Nay, have not they by *preaching* come to *govern*? Was ever that of *Solomon* more verified, *that servants have rid, while princes and nobles have gone on foot*? But God has been pleased, by a *miracle* of mercy, to dissipate this chaos, and to give us some dawnings of *liberty* and *settlement*. But now, let not those who are to rebuild our *Jerusalem*, think that the temple

must be built last. For if there be such a thing as a God, and religion, as whether men believe it or no, they will one day find and feel, assuredly he will stop our *liberty*, till we restore him his worship. Besides, it is a senseless thing in reason, to think that one of these interests can stand without the other, when in the very order of natural causes, government is preserved by religion.

But to return to *Jeroboam* with whom we first began. He laid the foundation of his government in destroying, though doubtless he coloured it with the name of reforming God's worship; but see the issue. Consider him cursed by God, maintaining his usurped title, by continual vexatious wars against the kings of *Judah*; smote in his posterity, which was made like the dung upon the face of the earth, as low and vile as those *priests* whom he had employed: consider him branded to all after ages; and now, when his kingdom and glory was at an end, and he and his posterity rotting under ground, and his name stinking above it, judge what a worthy prize he made in getting of a kingdom, by destroying the church. Wherefore the sum of all is this; to advise those whom it may concern, to consider *Jeroboam's* punishment, and then they will have little heart to *Jeroboam's* sin.

DISCOURSE V.*

THE SCRIBE INSTRUCTED.

MATTH. xiii. 52.

Then said he unto them, therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

IN this chapter we have a large discourse from the great Preacher of righteousness; a discourse fraught with all the commending excellencies of speech; delightful for its variety, admirable for its convincing quickness, and argumentative closeness, and (which is seldom an excellency in other sermons) *excellent for its length.*

For that, which is carried on with a continued unflagging vigour of expression, can never be thought tedious, nor long. And Christ, who was not only the *Preacher*, but himself also the *Word*, was furnished with a strain of heavenly oratory far above the heights of all human rhetoric whatsoever; his sermons being of that grace, that (as the world generally goes) they

[*One of the earliest public sermons we have of South," says the Retrospective Review, "is, 'The Scribe Instructed,' and ought to be read by every scribe 'which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven.' He was then a young man, but possessed all the wisdom and excellent good sense which mature age and experience can give. He had already amassed a treasure of rich and useful knowledge, which he produced at once to instruct, astonish, and confound."—Ed.]

might have prevailed even without *truth*, and yet pregnant with such irresistible *truth*, that the ornaments might have been spared; and indeed it still seems to have been used, rather to *gratify*, than *persuade* the hearer. So that we may (with a reverential acknowledgment both of the difference of the persons and the subject) give that testimony of Christ's sermons, which *Cicero*, (the great master of the *Roman* eloquence) did of *Demosthenes'* orations, who, being asked which of them was the best, answered the *longest*.

Our Saviour having finished his foregoing discourse, he now closes up all with the character of a *preacher* or *evangelist*; still addressing himself to his disciples, as to a designed seminary of preachers; or rather indeed, as to a kind of little itinerant academy (if I may so call it) of such as were to take his heavenly doctrines for the rule of their practice; and his excellent way of preaching, for the pattern of their imitation; thus lying at the feet of their blessed Lord, with the humblest attention of scholars, and the lowest prostration of subjects. The very *name* and *notion* of a *disciple* implying, and the nature of the thing itself requiring, both these qualifications.

Now the discussion of the words before us shall lie in these following particulars: in showing what is meant, 1st, By the *Scribe*. 2dly, By being instructed unto the *Kingdom of Heaven*. 3dly, By bringing out of his treasure things new and old; and how upon this account he stands compared to an *householder*.

And 1. concerning the word *Scribe*. It was a name, which amongst the *Jews* was applied to two sorts of officers.

(1.) To a *civil*; and so it signifies a *notary*, or in a large sense, any one employed to draw up deeds or writings. Whether in an higher station, as we read in the 2 *Kings*, xxii. that *Shaphan* was the *king's scribe* or secretary; or, as in a lower sense, we find this appellation given to that officer, who appeared in quelling

the uproar at *Ephesus*, as we read in *Acts* xix. 35. where he is called γραμματεὺς, which we may fitly render, (as our *English* text does) the *town-clerk*. To this sort also some would refer those mentioned in *Matth.* ii. who are there called *the scribes of the people*.

* * * * *

(2.) This name *scribe* signifies a church officer, one skilful in the law to interpret and explain it. For still we find the scribes reckoned with the great doctors of the *Jewish* church, and for the most part with the *Pharisees* in the *evangelists*, and by St. *Paul* with the *disputer of this world*, 1 *Cor.* i. 20. and sometimes called also νομικοὶ, *lawyers*, (*Luke* vii. 30. *Luke* xi. 52.) that is, expert in the *Mosaic* law. Not that these *scribes* were really any part of the *Pharisees*, (as some have thought,) for *Pharisee* was the name of a *sect*, *scribe* of an *office*. By *scribe* therefore must be here meant an *expounder of the law to the people*; such an one as *Ezra*, that excellent person, so renowned amongst the *Jews*, who is said to have been a ready *scribe in the law of Moses*. For though, indeed, the word *scribe* in the *English* and *Latin* imports barely a *writer*, and the *Greek*, by its derivation from γραφω, strictly signifies no more; yet by its nearer derivation from γράμμα, which signifies a *letter*, it seems to represent to us, that *these scribes were men of the bare letter or text*, whose business it was to give the *literal* sense and meaning of the law. And therefore, that the men here spoken of, whom the *Jews* accounted of such eminent skill in it, should by their office be only *transcribers* of it, can with no more reason, I think, be affirmed, than if we should allow him to be a skilful *divine*, who should transcribe other men's *works*, and, which is more, preach them when he had done. But,

2. As for *being instructed unto the kingdom of heaven*. By the *kingdom of heaven* is here signified to us, only the preaching of the gospel, or the state of the church, under the gospel; as, *repent, for the kingdom*

of heaven is at hand, that is, *the gospel is shortly to be preached*. Now we are to take notice, that it was the way of Christ in his preaching to the *Jews*, to express the offices and things belonging to his church under the gospel, by alluding to those of the *Jewish* under the law, as being familiar to them. Hence he calls a preacher of the gospel, a *scribe*; and this from the analogy of what the scribe did in the explication of the law, with what the gospel minister was to do, in preaching and pressing home the doctrines of Christianity upon the heart and conscience; much the harder work (God knows) of the two.

Now the word, which we here render *instructed*, in the *Greek* is *μαθητευθεῖς*, one who was *schooled* or *disciplined* to the work by long exercise and study. He was not to be *inspired* or *blown into the ministry*. He was to fetch his preparations from *industry*, not *infusion*. And forasmuch as Christ's design was to express *evangelical* officers by *legal*, this resemblance was to hold, at least, in the qualification of the persons, *viz.* that as the *scribe of the law* did with much labour stock himself with all variety of learning requisite to find out the sense of the same, so the *evangelical scribe* should bring as much learning, and bestow as much labour in his employment, as the other did in his; especially since it *required* as much, and *deserved* a great deal more.

3. And so pass we to show *the bringing out of his treasure, things new and old*. By treasure is here signified that, which in *Latin* is called *penus*, a *storehouse*, or *repository*; and the bringing out thence things new and old was (as some are of opinion) a kind of proverb amongst the *Hebrews*, expressing a man's giving a liberal entertainment to his friends. And accordingly, as here borrowed from the *householder*, and applied to the *gospel scribe* in the text, it makes the drift of the whole parable to amount to this: that as the former, if a man of substance, of a large stock, and as

large a mind, will entertain his friends and guests with plenty and variety of provision, answerable to the difference of men's palates, as well as the difference of the season ; not confining them to the same standing common fare, but, as occasion requires, adding something of more cost and rarity besides ; so our *gospel scribe*, in the entertainment of his spiritual guests, is not always to set before them, only the main substantials of religion, whether for belief, or practice, but as the matter shall require, to add also *illustration* to the one, and *enforcement* to the other, sometimes persuading, sometimes terrifying, and accordingly addressing himself to the afflicted with *gospel lenitives*, and to the obstinate with *legal corrosives* ; and since the relish of all is not the same, he is to apply to the vulgar with plain familiar similitudes, and to the learned with greater choiceness of language, and closeness of argument ; and moreover, since every age of the church more peculiarly needs the clearer discussion of some truth or other, then more particularly opposed ; therefore to the inculcating the acknowledged points of Christianity, he is to add something of the controversies, opinions, and vices of the times ; otherwise he cannot reach men's minds and inclinations, which are apt to be argued this way or that, according to different times and occasions ; and consequently he falls so far short of a *good orator*, and much more of an *accurate preacher*.

This, I conceive, is the full sense of the words, and which I shall yet farther strengthen with this observation : " That we shall find that Christ's design all along the evangelists was to place the economy of the church under the gospel, above that of the *Jewish* under the law, as more excellent in every particular." Now it was the way of the scribes then, to dwell wholly upon the letter of the law, and what *Moses* said ; showing the construction, the coherence, and force of his words, only sometimes sprinkling them a little with tradition, and the pompous allegation of their ancient *rabbies*,

ἐφ' ἑτέῃ τοῖς ἀρχαίοις. But Christ, who, we read, taught with authority, as one not only *expounding*, but *commanding* the words, took a freedom of expression, in showing, not the sense of *Moses* only, but the farther intent of God himself speaking to *Moses*; and then clothing this sense in parables, similitudes, and other advantages of rhetoric, so as to give it an easier entrance into the mind and affections; and what he did himself, he recommended to his disciples. So that, I think, we may not unfitly account for the meaning of our Saviour thus: You see how the scribes of the law with much niceness confine themselves to the letter of *Moses*, but *the scribe who is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven*, must not dwell only upon the letter and shell of things, but often enlarge upon the subject, adapting his discourse to the various circumstances, tempers, and apprehensions of his hearers; and so letting it rise or fall in the *degrees* of its plainness or quickness, according to his hearers' dulness or docility. Thus, I hope, I have made out the full import of the words, and the design of our Saviour in them, which I shall now more thoroughly prosecute in this proposition, naturally resulting from them so explained, *viz.*

That the greatest advantages, both as to natural and acquired abilities, are not only consistent with, but required to the due performance of the work of a preacher of the gospel.

Not that I affirm, that every one, who has not such a furniture of parts and knowledge, is therefore wholly unfit to be a preacher; for then most of us might forever sit down and adore, but not venture upon this work. But in giving a rule for any thing or action, we must assign the utmost perfection, which either of them is capable of, and to which men ought to aspire; not to which they of necessity must or can attain. We know the *copy* always falls short of the *original*, and the *performance* of the *precept*. But still the rule must be *absolute*; otherwise we should never look

upon our improvement as our *duty*, or our imperfections, as our *defects*.

In the handling of the proposition drawn forth, I shall show,

I. What qualifications are required to a minister of the word, from the force of the comparison between *him* and the *scribe*.

II. The reasons to evince their necessity.

III. I shall draw some inferences from the whole.

I. Concerning *the qualifications required*, &c. I shall bring them under these two.

First, An ability of the powers and faculties of the mind. And *Second*, An habitual preparation of the same, by exercise and improvement.

Which two, I conceive, contain all that both *nature* and *art* can do in this matter. And

First, A natural ability of the powers and faculties of the mind. And what these are is apparent, *viz.* *judgment, memory, and invention.*

* * * * *

1st, For that great leading one, the *Judgment*; without which, how can any controversy in philosophy or divinity be duly stated or determined? How can that which is *ambiguous* be cleared, that which is *fallacious* be detected, or even *truth itself* be defended? How, where the words of scripture may bear several senses, some *proper*, and some *figurative*, can we be assured, which the speaker of them intended? How also, without this, when a scripture has been corrupted, partly by filching some words out of it, and partly by a supposititious foisting of some in, shall the whole be rescued from the imposture passed upon it, and so restored? And lastly, how shall many seeming clashings, and dark passages in sacred history and chronology be placed in such a light, as may thoroughly satisfy, or at least silence the doubtful and exceptionous? All which particulars (with many more of the like nature) being confessedly knotty,

can never be accorded, but by a competent stock of critical learning; and can any one (even according to the very *signification* of the word) be said to be a *critic*, and yet not *judicious*? And then,

2d, For Memory. This may be reckoned twofold. 1. That which serves to treasure up our reading or observations. And 2. That which serves to suggest to us, in our reciting of any thing, which we had endeavoured to commit to our memory before. I distinguish them, because one may be, and often is excellent, where the other is deficient. But now, were this never so large, yet theology is of that vast compass, as to employ and exhaust it. For what volumes are there of *antiquity*, church history, &c. which well deserve reading; and to what purpose do we read, if we cannot remember? But then also, for the reciting part of memory, that is so necessary, that *Cicero* himself observes of oratory,* (which indeed, upon a sacred subject, is preaching) that upon the want of memory alone, *omnia, etiamsi præclarissima fuerint, in oratore peritura*. And we know that to a popular auditory it is upon the matter, *all*. There being, in the esteem of many, but little difference between *sermons read*, and *homilies*, only that homilies are *much better*. And then,

3d, For Invention. A faculty acting chiefly in the strength of what is offered it by the *imagination*. This is so far from being admitted by many as necessary, that it is decried by them as utterly unlawful; such grand exemplars, I mean, as make their own abilities the sole measure of what is fit or unfit, so that what they themselves cannot reach, others, forsooth, ought not to attempt. But I see not why divinity should suffer for their narrowness, and be deprived of the service of a most excellent endowment of the mind, and which gives a shine to all the rest. For I reckon upon this as a great truth, that there can be no endowment in the soul of man, but may even in its choicest operations

* *Primo Libro de Oratore.*

be sanctified and employed in the work of the ministry. And there is also another principle, which I account altogether as true as the former; namely, *that piety engages no man to be dull*; though lately, I confess, it passed with some for a mark of *regeneration*. And when I shall see these principles disproved, I shall be ready to grant all exercise of the fancy or invention, in the handling things sacred, to be unlawful. As fancy, indeed, is often taken in the worst sense for a conceited, whimsical brain, which is apt to please itself in odd and ungrounded notions; so I confess, that nothing is more destructive of true divinity; but then I must add withal, that if fancy be taken in this sense, those who damn it in its other sober acceptation, have much the greatest share of it themselves. But if, on the other hand, we take fancy for that power of the mind, which suggests opposite and pertinent expressions, and handsome ways of setting off those truths, which the judgment has rationally pitched upon, it will be found full as useful as any of all the three mentioned by us, in the work of preaching, and consequently slighted by none but such as envy that in others, which they are never like to be envied for the want of in themselves. He therefore, who thinks to *be a scribe instructed &c.* without a competency of *judgment, memory, and invention*, attempts a great *superstructure*, where there is no *foundation*; and this, surely, is a very preposterous way to *edify* either himself or others.

And thus much for the first of the two qualifications of our evangelical scribe. I proceed now to the

Second, Which was an *habitual preparation* by exercise and due improvement of the same. Powers act but weakly and irregularly, till they are heightened and perfected by their habits. A well radicated habit, in a lively, vegete *faculty*, is like an *apple of gold* in a picture of silver; 'tis perfection upon perfection, 'tis a coat of mail upon our armour, and, in a word, it is the raising of the soul, at least, one story higher. Now it

is not enough to have books, or for a man to have his divinity in his pocket, or upon the shelf; but he must have mastered his notions, till they incorporate into his mind, so as to be able to produce and wield them upon all occasions; and not when a difficulty is proposed, to say, that he will consult such and such authors: For this is not to be a divine, who is rather to be a *walking library*, than a *walking index*. As, to go no farther than the similitude in the text, we should not account him a good or generous housekeeper, who should not have always something of standing provision by him, so as never to be surprised, but that he should still be found able to *treat* his friend at least, though perhaps not always presently to *feast* him: So the scribe here spoken of should have an inward sufficiency to support and bear him up; especially where present performance urges, and actual preparation can be but short. Thus, it is not the oil in the *wick*, but in the *vessel*, which must feed the *lamp*. The former indeed may cause a *present blaze*, but it is the latter which must *give it a lasting light*. It is not the spending money a man has in his pocket, but his hoards in the chest, or in the bank, which must make him rich. A dying man has his breath in his nostrils, but to have it in the lungs is that which must preserve life. Nor will it suffice to have raked up a few notions here and there, or to rally up all one's little utmost into one discourse, which can constitute a divine, or give a man stock enough to set up with, any more than a soldier who had filled his snapsack should thereupon set up for keeping house. No; a man would then quickly be drained, his short stock would serve but for one meeting in ordinary converse, and he would be in danger of meeting with the same company twice. And therefore there must be store, plenty, and a treasure, lest he turn broker in divinity, and having run the rounds of a beaten exhausted *common place*, be forced to stand still, or go the same round over again; pretending to

his auditors, that it is profitable for them to hear the same truths often inculcated to them ; though, I humbly conceive, that to inculcate the same truths, is not of necessity to repeat *the same words*. And therefore to avoid such beggarly pretences, there must be an habitual preparation as to the work we are now speaking of. And that in two respects.

1. In respect of the *generality of knowledge* required to it. The truth is, if we consider that great multitude of things to be known, and the labour and time required to the knowledge of each particular, it is enough to discourage all attempt, and cause a careless despair. What *Hippocrates* said of the cure of the body, is much truer of the cure of the soul, *that life is short, and art long*. And I might add also, that the mind is weak and narrow, and the business difficult and large. And should I say, that preaching was the least part of a divine, it would, I believe, be thought a bold word, and look like a paradox, (as the world goes) but perhaps, for all that, never the farther from being a great truth. For is it not a greater thing, to untie the knots of many intricate controversies ? To stop the mouths of gainsayers, whereas some of them are so opposite amongst themselves, that you can hardly confute one, but with arguments taken from the other, though both of them equally erroneous ? In which and the like cases, to carry an argument for the defence of truth so warily, that an adversary shall not sometimes be able to pervert it to the support of an error, since, though the argument may be materially the same, yet the different management of it may produce quite different inferences from it ; this, no doubt, is a matter of great difficulty, and no less dexterity. And the like also may be said of casuistical divinity for resolving *cases of conscience* ; especially where several obligations seem to interfere and jostle one another, so that it seems impossible to the conscience to turn either way without sin. To clear a way out of

which, being a work certainly depending upon much knowledge of the *canon and civil laws*, as well as of the principles of divinity, it must needs require much labour for the casuist to provide himself with materials for this purpose, and then no less art and skill to apply them to the conscience. And as it is highly requisite, that this should in some measure be found in every divine, and in its perfection in some, which, since it cannot well be, but by the whole employment of a man's time, not diverted by other ministerial business, it so far shows the happy constitution of such churches as afford place of suitable scholastic maintenance (without the trouble of a pastoral charge) for such, whose abilities carry them to the study of the *controversial or critical part* of theology, rather than any other belonging to the ministry. But on the contrary, where there is no such proper maintenance allotted for a divine, but by preaching only, let us suppose that which in such a case we easily may: That one had a peculiar inclination to controversy, or to dive into antiquity, or to search critically into the original letter of the scriptures, and withal had little inclination, and perhaps less ability, to preach, but yet knew no other way to live as a divine, but by preaching. Do we not here lose an excellent casuist, an accurate critic, or profound school divine, only to make a very mean preacher? Who, had he had the forementioned encouragement, might have been eminently serviceable to the church in any of those other ways, while he only serves the necessities of life in this. And this has been observed by a learned knight,* to have been an inconvenience even in those days when the revenues of the church were not wholly *reformed* from it; that for our not then setting aside whole societies for the managing of controversies and nothing else, as the church of *Rome* finds it necessary to do, divines for the most part handle controversies only as a diversion in the

* Sir Edwyn Sandys in his *Eutopæ Speculum*.

midst of their pastoral labours, and many of them have performed it accordingly. For as a man's faculties will not suffice him for all arts and sciences, so neither will they sometimes reach all the parts and difficulties of any of them. But the late times made the matter yet ten times worse with us, when the *rooters* and *through-reformers* made clean work with the church, and so by stripping the clergy of their rights and preferences, left us in a fair posture (you may be sure) both *offensive* and *defensive*, to encounter our acute and learned adversaries the *Jesuits*. For then the polemics of the *field* had quite silenced those of the *schools*. All being busied, some in pulpits, and some in tubs, in the grand work of holding forth, and of *edification*, (as the word then went,) so that they seemed like an army of men armed only with *trowels*, and perhaps amongst thousands only a *Saul* and a *Jonathan* with *swords* in their hands, only one or two with scholastic artillery for controversy.* But this by the way, and as a sad instance to show how fatal it is, that when divinity takes in so large a compass of learning, and that for so many uses, the church should be robbed of the proper and most effectual means of stocking herself with it.

But some perhaps will reply; what needs all this? we are resolved to preach only, and for this much *reading* cannot be requisite, except only for the *delivery of our sermons*: for we will *preach our own experiences*. To which I answer, that be this as it may; but yet if these men preach their own experiences (as they call them) without some other sort of knowledge, both their hearers and themselves too, will quickly have more

[* "Wollebius in English" occurs among the works sneeringly detailed by South, while touching on the same topic in the preceding sermon (p. 80), as making the theological preparation of many in his time; puritan preachers, of course, we are to understand. It may not be out of place here to mention, that this despised and now utterly forgotten author, in the *original Latin* however, was, less than fifty years ago, the theological text-book in our own University. When it is borne in mind, how deeply, in earlier times, its English friends gave the tone and character to that institution, it strikingly illustrates and confirms the sarcasm of South.—ED.]

than sufficient *experience* of their confidence and ridiculous impertinence. But as there are certain mountebanks in physic, so there are much the same also in divinity, such as have only two or three little experiments and popular harangues to amuse the vulgar with; but being wholly unacquainted with the solid grounds and rules of science, from whence alone come true sufficiency and skill, they are pitifully ignorant and useless as to any great and worthy purposes, and fit for little else but to show the world how easily *fools* may be imposed upon by *knaves*. Besides which, there is required also,

2d, The like *preparation as to significant speech and expression*. For as I show, that by *knowledge* a man informs himself, so by *expression* he conveys that knowledge to others; and as bare words convey, so the propriety and elegance of them gives force and facility to the conveyance. But because this is like to have more opposers, especially such as call a speaking coherently upon any sacred subject, a *blending of man's wisdom with the word, an offering of strange fire*; and account the being *pertinent*, even the next door to the being *profane*, I say, for their sakes, I shall prove a thing clear in itself by scripture, and that not by arguments, or consequences drawn from thence, but by downright instances occurring in it, and those so very plain, that even such as themselves cannot be ignorant of them. For in God's word we have not only a body of *religion*, but also a system of the best *rhetoric*. And as the highest things require the highest expressions, so shall we find nothing in scripture so sublime in itself, but it is reached, and sometimes overtopped by the sublimity of the expression. And first, where did majesty ever ride in more splendor, than in those descriptions of the divine power in *Job xxxviii. xxxix. and xl.*? And what triumph was ever celebrated with livelier and more exalted poetry, than in the song of *Moses, Deut. xxxii.*? And then for the passions of

the soul ; which being things of the most wonderful and various operation in human nature, are therefore the proper object of rhetoric : Let us take a view how the scripture expresses the most noted and powerful of them. And here what poetry ever paralleled *Solomon* in his description of love, as to all the ways, effects, and extasies, and little tyrannies of that commanding passion ? See *Ovid* with his *omnia vincit amor*, &c. And *Virgil* with his *vulnus alit venis & cæco carpitur igne*, &c. How jejune and thin are they to the poetry of *Solomon*, *Canticles viii. 6. Love is strong as death, and jealousy cruel as the grave* ? And as for beauty, he describes that so, that he even transcribes it into his expressions. And where do we read such strange risings and fallings, now the faintings and languishings, now the terrors and astonishments of *despair* venting themselves in such high amazing strains, as in *Psalm lxxvii* ? Or where did we ever find sorrow flowing forth in such a natural prevailing *pathos*, as in the *Lamentations* of *Jeremy* ? One would think, that every letter was wrote with a tear, every word was the noise of a breaking heart ; that the author was a man compacted of sorrows ; disciplined to grief from his infancy ; one who never breathed but in sighs, nor spoke but in a groan. So that he,* who said he would not read the scripture *for fear of spoiling his style*, showed himself as much a blockhead as an atheist, and to have as small a gust of the elegancies of expression, as of the sacredness of the matter. And shall we now think that the scripture forbids all ornament of speech, and engages men to be dull, flat, and slovenly in their discourses ? But let us look a little further, and see whether the New Testament abrogates what we see so frequently used in the Old ? And for this, what mean all the parables used by our Saviour, the known and greatest elegancies of speech ? So that, if this way was unlawful before, Christ by his

* Politian.

example has authorized it since, and, if good and lawful, has confirmed it. But as for the men whom we contend with ; I see not why they should exterminate all rhetoric, who still treat of things figuratively, and by the worst of figures too, their whole discourse being one continued *Meiosis* to lessen and debase the great things of the gospel below themselves. Besides that I need not go beyond the very words of the text for an impregnable proof of this : For Christ says, that a *scribe instructed &c. ought to bring out of his treasure things new and old*. Now I demand, what are the things here to be understood ? For as to the matter he is to treat of, the articles of the Christian religion are and still must be the same, and therefore there can be no such variety *as new and old* in them. Wherefore it can be only in the way of expressing those things. Besides that our Saviour, in these words, particularly relates to the manner of his own preaching, upon occasion of the very sermon, which we find all along this chapter delivered in parables ; so that by *new and old* may be meant nothing else, but a fluent dexterity of the most suitable words and pregnant arguments, to set off gospel truths. For questionless, when Christ says, that a *scribe* must be stocked with *things new and old*, we must not think that he meant, that he should have a *hoard of old sermons*, (who-soever made them) with a *bundle of new opinions* ; for this certainly would have furnished out such entertainment to his spiritual guests, as no rightly-disposed *palate* could ever relish, or *stomach* bear. And therefore the thing which Christ here drives at, must needs be copiousness of sacred eloquence.

II. And thus much for the first of the three general heads proposed by us ; which was to show the qualifications necessary for a *gospel scribe instructed &c.* I proceed now to the second, to assign the reasons of this their necessity ; and these shall be three.

1. Because the preacher works upon men's minds

only as a *moral agent*, and as one who can do no more than persuade, and not by any physical efficiency. And herein I do not say, that *conversion* is caused only by *moral suasion* : For if we consider the strength of our corruption, and how it has seized upon those powers which are but little under the command of the intellectual part, I think it cannot be subdued by meer *suasion*, which in its utmost reaches only to the convincing of that : But the heart must be changed by a much higher power, even by an immediate work of God's Spirit infusing a quality into the soul, not there before, which by degrees shall weaken, and work out our inherent corruption ; and this being a creating work, is done solely and immediately by God himself, forasmuch as being an effect of that infinite power, which cannot be conveyed to an instrumental agent.

But you will say then, if conversion be the sole work of God, what need is there of a preacher ? And how can he be said to be God's instrument in the work of a man's conversion ; to which I answer, 1st, That *God's institution of preaching* is a sufficient reason for it, though we knew no other. 2d, That when the preacher is said to be an *instrument* in the conversion of a sinner, it is not meant, that he is such by a properly physical efficiency, but only *morally*, and by *persuasion*. I explain my meaning thus. A *physical instrument* is that, which, partaking of the force and casuality of the principal agent from thence derived to it, produces a suitable effect. As when I divide a thing, the force of my hand is conveyed to the knife, by virtue of which the knife cuts or divides. And thus, I say, the preacher cannot be the instrument of conversion, because that infinite Power, which *does convert*, cannot be conveyed to any finite being whatsoever. But a *moral instrument* is quite of another nature ; and is that, (as I may so express it,) *Non quo producente, sed quo interveniente sequitur effectus*. Not that which conversion is effected by, but that without which (ordinarily at least)

it is not. So that while the minister is preaching and *persuading*, God puts forth another *secret influence*, quite different from that of the preacher, though still going along with it; and it is this, by which God immediately touches the sinner's heart, and converts him. Howbeit, the preacher is still said to be instrumental in this great work, God not being pleased to exert his action, but in concurrence with the preacher exerting his. And thus having given God his prerogative, and the preacher his due, I infer the necessity of those forementioned abilities and *preparations* for preaching, as being the most proper means of *persuasion*. See this exemplified in St. *Paul* himself; when he deals with the *Jews*, how he endeavours to insinuate what he says, by pleading his own *kindred* with them, speaking honourably of *Abraham* and of the law, and calling the gospel *the law of faith*; and affirming, that it did *establish the law*. All which was the true art of natural rhetoric, thus to convey his sense under those names and notions, which he knew were highly pleasing to them. But then, when he would win over the *Gentiles*; forasmuch as there was a standing feud between them and the *Jews*, (the *Jews*, like the men here of late, for ever unsainting all the world besides themselves,) observe how he deals with them. He tells them of the rejection of the *Jews*, and the *Gentiles* being ingrafted in their room; and that *Abraham* believed unto justification before he was circumcised, and therefore was no less the father of the *uncircumcised* believers, than of the circumcised. He takes occasion also to undervalue circumcision and the ceremonial law, as abused by the *Jews*, and in themselves things most hateful to other nations. Now all this was hugely pleasing to the *Gentiles*, and therefore very apt to persuade. But had not St. *Paul* been a man of learning and skill in the art of rhetoric, he could not have suited such opposite exhortations to such different sorts of men with so much dexterity.

And the same course, in dealing with men's minds, is a minister of the word to take now. * * * And now what can this be grounded upon, but upon natural philosophy, and a knowledge of men's passions and interests, the great springs of all their actions? And upon the like ground it is, that for a preacher in his discourses to the people to insist only upon universals, is but a cold, languid way of persuading or dissuading; as to tell men in general, that they are sinners, and that going on in sin without repentance, they are under the wrath of God; all which they think they knew before, and accordingly receive it as a word of course. But conviction, the usual forerunner of *conversion*, is from particulars, as if the preacher should tell his hearers, that he who continues to cheat, cozen, and equivocate; that he who drinks, and swears, and whores, is the person to whom the curse directly belongs. This seriously urged, and discreetly applied, will, if any thing, carry it home to the conscience. And now is not the reason of this method also to be fetched from philosophy, as well as from religion? For we know, that men naturally have only a confused knowledge of universals, but a lively idea of particulars. And that which gives a clear representation of a thing to the *apprehension*, makes a suitable *impression of it* upon the will and affections. Whosoever therefore pretends to be a preacher, must know, that his main business is to *persuade*, and that without the helps of human learning, this can hardly be done to any purpose. So that if he finds himself wholly destitute of these, and has nothing else to trust to, but some groundless, windy, and phantastic notions about *the Spirit*, (the common sanctuary of fanatics and enthusiasts,) he would do well to *look back*, and taking his *hand* off from this *plough*, to put it to another, much fitter for him. But in the mean time, as for ourselves, who pretend not to a pitch above other mortals, we must rest content to revere the wisdom, and follow the examples of those

who went before us, and enjoined us the study of the arts and sciences, as the surest and most tried way to *that of divinity*.

2. The necessity of these preparations shall be taken from this consideration : That at the first promulgation of the gospel, God was pleased to furnish the preachers of it with abilities proper for that great work, after a miraculous way. For still we find, that the scripture represents the apostles as *illiterate men*, and that the *chief priests and elders of the Jews* took particular notice of them as such, *Acts iv. 13*. They were *ἄνθρωποι ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται*, that is to say, according to the strict signification of the word, men unlearned, and of a mean and plebeian condition. Nevertheless, since they were appointed by God to preach the gospel to several nations ; a work requiring a considerable knowledge of the languages of those nations, and impossible to be performed without it ; and yet no less impossible for the apostles, having neither time nor opportunity to acquire that knowledge in the ordinary course of study ; God himself supplies this defect, and endues them with all necessary qualifications by immediate and divine infusion. So that *being filled with the Holy Ghost, they forthwith spoke with other tongues* ; and that so clearly and intelligibly, as both to convince and astonish all who heard them, even those of the most different nations and languages, as well as their own countrymen the Jews themselves. From whence I thus argue : That if the forementioned helps were not always of most singular use, and sometimes of indispensable necessity to the calling of a divine, certainly the most wise God would never have been at the expense of a miracle, to endow men with them. For he, who observes that order in all his works, as never to overdo any thing, nor carry on the business of his ordinary Providence by extraordinary ways, would doubtless (in the eye of the world at least) seem to make cheap those noblest instances of

his power, should he ever exert them but where he saw it of the highest concern to his own honour and man's happiness, that something should be done for both, which bare nature, *left to itself, could never do.*

3. The last reason for the necessity of such preparations for the ministry, shall be drawn from *the dignity of the subject of it*, which is divinity. And what is divinity, but a doctrine treating of the nature, attributes, and works of the great God, as he stands related to rational creatures? And the way how rational creatures may serve and enjoy him? And if so, is not the subject matter of it the greatest, and the design of it the noblest in the world, as being no less than to direct an immortal soul to its endless felicity? It has been disputed, to which of the intellectual habits, mentioned by *Aristotle*, it most properly belongs; some referring it to *wisdom*, some to *science*, some to *prudence*, and some compounding it of several of them together. But those seem to speak most to the purpose, who will not have it *formally* any one of them, but *virtually*, and in an *eminent transcendant* manner, *all*. And now can we think, that a doctrine of that depth, that height, and that vast compass, grasping within it all the dimensions of human science, does not worthily claim all the preparations, whereby the wit and industry of man can fit him for it? All other sciences are accounted but handmaids to divinity; and shall the handmaid be richer adorned and better set off, than her lady? In other things, the *art* usually excels the matter, and the ornament we bestow, is better than the subject we bestow it upon. But here we are sure, that we have such a subject before us, as not only calls for, but commands and deserves our utmost application to it; a subject of that inherent worth, that it is not capable of any addition from us, but shines through all the artificial lustre we can put upon it. The study of divinity is indeed difficult, and

we are to labour hard, and dig deep for it ; but then we dig in a *golden mine*, which equally *invites and rewards* our labour.

III. And so we pass at length to show, *what useful inferences may be drawn* from the foregoing particulars. And the first shall be a just and severe reproof to two sorts of men.

1. To such as detract from the grandeur of the gospel, by a puerile and indecent levity in their discourses of it to the people.

2. To such as depreciate, and (as much as in them lies) debase the same, by a coarse, careless, rude, and insipid way of handling the great and invaluable truths of it ; both of them certainly objects of the most deserved reproof.

1. For those who disparage the gospel, by a puerile and indecent sort of levity in their discourses upon it, so extremely below the subject discoursed of. All vain, luxuriant allegories, rhyming *cadences* of similiary words, are such pitiful embellishments of speech, as serve for nothing, but to embase divinity ; and the use of them, but like the plaistering of marble, or the painting of gold, the glory of which is to be seen, and to shine by no other lustre but their own. What *Quintilian* most discreetly says of *Seneca's* handling philosophy, that he did *rerum pondera minutissimis sententiis frangere*, break, and, as it were, emasculate the weight of his subject by little affected sentences, the same may with much more reason be applied to those, who detract from the excellency of things sacred by a comical lightness of expression ; as when their prayers shall be set out in such a dress, as if they did not supplicate, but compliment Almighty God ; and their sermons so garnished with quibbles, as if they played with truth and immortality ; and neither believed these things themselves, nor were willing that others should. For is it possible, that a man in his senses should be merry and jocose with eternal life and death, if he really de-

signed to strike the awful impression of either into the consciences of men? No, no; this is no less a contradiction to common sense and reason, than to the strictest notions of religion. And as this can by no means be accounted divinity, so neither indeed can it pass for wit; which yet such chiefly seem to affect in such performances. For these are as much the stains of true humane eloquence, as they are the blots of divinity, and might be as well confuted out of *Quintilian's* institutions, as *St. Paul's* epistles. Such are wholly mistaken in the nature of *wit*: for *true wit* is a severe and manly thing. Wit in divinity is nothing else but sacred truths suitably expressed. 'Tis not shreds of *Latin* or *Greek*, nor a *Deus dixit*, and a *Deus benedixit*, nor those little quirks or divisions into the *οὐ*, the *διότι*, and the *καθότι*, or the *egress*, *regress*, and *progress*, and other such stuff (much like the style of a lease) that can properly be called *wit*. For that is not wit, which consists not with *wisdom*. For can you think that it had not been an easy matter for any one, in the text here pitched upon by me, to have run out into a long, fulsome allegory, comparing the scribe and the householder together, and now and then to have cast in a rhyme, with a *quid*, a *quo*, and a *quomodo*, and the like? But certainly it would then have been much more difficult for the judicious to hear such things, than for any, if so inclined, to have composed them. The practice therefore of such is upon no terms to be endured. Nor,

2. Is the contrary to be at all more endured in those, who cry up their mean, heavy, careless, and insipid way of handling things sacred, as the only evangelical way of preaching, while they charge all their crude incoherences, sawcy familiarities with God, and nauseous tautologies, upon the Spirit prompting such things to them, and that as the most elevated and seraphic heights of religion. Both these sorts are absolutely to be exploded; and it is hard to judge, which of them

deserves it most. 'Tis indeed no ways decent for a *grave matron* to be attired in the gaudy, flaunting dress of youth; but it is not at all uncomely for such an one to be clothed in the richest and most costly silk, if black or 'grave. For it is not the *richness* of the piece, but the *gaudiness* of the colour, which exposes to censure. And therefore, as I shew before, that the *δῆ*'s, and the *διότι*'s, &c. could not be accounted wit; so neither can the whimsical cant of *issues*, *products*, *tendencies*, *breathings*, *indwellings*, *rollings*, *recumbencies*,* and scriptures misapplied, be accounted divinity. In a word, let but these new lights, (so apt to teach their betters,) instead of this and the like jargon, bring us, in their discourses, strength of argument, clearness of consequence, exactness of method, and propriety of speech, and then let prejudice and party deride them, if they can. But persons of light, undistinguishing heads, not able to carry themselves clear between extremes, think that they must either flutter, as it were, in the air, by a kind of vain, empty lightness, or lie groveling upon the ground, by a dead and contemptible flatness; both the one and the other, no doubt, equally ridiculous. But after all, I cannot but believe, that it is the bewitching easiness of the latter way of the two, which chiefly endears it to the practice of these men; and I hope it will not prove offensive to the auditory, if, to release it (could I be so happy) from suffering by such stuff for the future, I venture upon some short description of it; and it is briefly thus. First of all they seize upon some text, from whence they draw something, (which they call a *doctrine*) and well may it be said to be *drawn* from the words; forasmuch as it seldom naturally flows from them. In the next place, they branch it into several heads; perhaps twenty, or thirty, or upwards. Whereupon, for the prosecution of these, they repair to some *trusty Concordance*, which never fails

* Terms often and much used by one J. O. a great leader and oracle in those times. [The celebrated *John Owen*, the father of the Independents, is doubtless here meant.—ED.]

them, and by the help of that, they range six or seven scriptures under each head ; which scriptures they prosecute one by one, enlarging upon one, for some considerable time, till they have spoiled it ; and then that being done, they pass to another, which in its turn suffers accordingly. And these impertinent and unpremeditated enlargements they look upon as *the motions and breathings of the Spirit*, and therefore much beyond those *carnal ordinances of sense and reason*, supported by industry and study ; and this they call a *saving way* of preaching, as it must be confessed to be a way to save much labour, and nothing else that I know of. But how men should thus come to make the salvation of an immortal soul, such a slight *extempore* business, I must profess, I cannot understand ; and would gladly understand upon whose example they ground this way of preaching ; not upon that of the apostles, I am sure. For it is said of St. *Paul*, in his sermon before *Felix*, that *he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. Acts xxiv. 25.* The words *διαλεγόμενου δὲ αὐτοῦ*, according to the natural import of them, signifying, that he reasoned dialectically, following one conclusion with another, and with the most close and pressing arguments from the most persuasive topics of reason and divinity. Whereupon we quickly find the prevalence of his preaching in a suitable effect, *that Felix trembled.* Whereas had *Paul* only cast about his arms, spoke himself hoarse, and cried, *You are damned*, though *Felix* (as guilty as he was) might have given him the hearing, yet possibly he might also have looked upon him as one whose passion had, at that time, got the start of his judgment, and accordingly have given him the same coarse salute, which the same *Paul* afterwards so undeservedly met with from *Festus* ; but his zeal was too much under the conduct of his reason, to fly out at such a rate. But to pass from these indecencies to others, as little to be allowed in this sort of men, can any toler-

able reason be given for those strange, new postures used by some in the delivery of the word? Such as *shutting the eyes, distorting the face, and speaking through the nose*, which, I think, cannot so properly be called *preaching*, as *toning of a sermon*. Nor do I see, why *the word* may not be altogether as effectual for *the conversion of souls*, delivered by one who has the manners to look his auditory in the face, using his own countenance, and his own native voice, without straining it to a lamentable and doleful *whine*, (never serving to any purpose, but where some religious cheat is to be carried on.) That ancient, though seemingly odd saying, *Loquere ut te videam*, in my poor judgment, carries in it a very notable instruction, and peculiarly applicable to the persons and matter here pointed out. For, supposing one to be a very able and excellent *speaker*, yet under the forementioned circumstances, he must, however, needs be a very ill sight; and the case of his poor suffering hearers very severe upon them, while both the *matter uttered* by him, shall grate hard *upon the ear*, and the person uttering it, at the same time *equally offend the eye*. It is clear therefore, that the men of this method have sullied the noble science of divinity, and can never warrant their practice, either from religion or reason, or the rules of decent behaviour, nor yet from the example of the apostles, and least of all from that of our Saviour himself. For none surely will imagine, *that these men's speaking as never man spoke before*, can pass for any *imitation of him*. And here, I humbly conceive, that it may not be amiss to take occasion to utter a great truth, as both worthy to be now considered, and never to be forgot; that if we reflect upon the late times of confusion, which passed upon the ministry, we shall find, that the grand design of the fanatic crew was to persuade the world, that a standing, settled ministry, was wholly useless. This, I say, was the main point which they then drove at. And the great engine to

effect this was, by engaging men of several callings (and those the meaner still the better) to hold forth, and harangue the multitude, sometimes in streets, sometimes in churches, sometimes in barns, and sometimes from pulpits, and sometimes from tubs ; and in a word, wheresoever and howsoever they could clock the senseless, unthinking rabble about them. And with this practice well followed, they (and their friends the *Jesuits*) concluded, that in some time it would be no hard matter to persuade the people, that if men of other professions were able to preach the word, then to what purpose should there be a company of men brought up to it, and maintained in it, at the charge of a public allowance ? Especially, when at the same time, the *truly godly* so greedily gaped and grasped at it *for their self-denying selves*. So that preaching, we see, was their prime engine. But now what was it, which encouraged these men to set up for a work, which (if duly managed) was so difficult in itself, and which they were never bred to ? Why, no doubt, it was that cheap, illiterate way, then commonly cried up for the only *gospel, soul-searching way*, (as the word then went,) and which the craftier sort of them saw well enough, that with a little exercise and much confidence, they might in a short time come to equal, if not exceed ; as it cannot be denied, but that some few of them (with the help of a few friends *in masquerade*) accordingly did. But on the contrary, had preaching been reckoned a matter of solid and true learning, theological knowledge, and long and severe study, assuredly, no *preaching cobbler* amongst them all would have ventured *so far beyond his last*, as to undertake it. And consequently this their most powerful engine, for supplanting the church and clergy, had never been attempted, not perhaps so much as thought on ; and therefore of most singular benefit, no question, would it be to the *public*, if those, who have *authority* to second their ad-

vice, would counsel the ignorant and the forward, to consider *what* divinity is, and what they themselves are, and to put up their *preaching tools*, their *medulla's*, *note-books*, their *mellificiums*, *concordances*, and all, and betake themselves to some useful trade, which nature had most particularly fitted them for. This is what I thought fit to offer and recommend; and that not out of any humour of opposition to this or that sort of men, (for, whatsoever they may deserve, I think them below it, but out of a dutiful zeal for the advancement of what most of us profess, *divinity*; as likewise for the *honour* of that place, which we belong to, *the university*; and which of late years I have, with no small sorrow, heard often reflected upon, for the meanness of many performances in it, no ways answerable to the ancient reputation of so noble a seat of knowledge. For let the enemies of *that* and *us* say what they will, no man's dulness is or can be his duty, and much less his perfection.

And thus having considered the two contrary ways of handling the word, I shall now briefly give the reasons of our rejection of them both; and these shall be two.

First, Because both, to wit, the *light and comical*, and the *dull and heavy*, extremely discredit the ordinance of preaching. *Second*, Because they no less *disgrace the church* itself.

And, *First*, we shall find how much both of them expose the ordinance of preaching, which was originally designed for the two greatest things in the world; *the honour of God*, and the *conversion of souls*. For if to convert a soul, even by the word itself, and the strongest arguments which the reason of man can bring, (as being no more than *instruments* in the case,) if, I say, this be reckoned a work *above nature*, (as really it is,) then surely to convert one by a *jest* would be a reach beyond a *miracle*. In short, it is this unhallowed way of preaching, which turns the pulpit into a

stage, and the most sovereign remedy against sin *into the sacrifice of fools*; making it a matter of sport to the light and vain, of pity to the devout, and of scorn and loathing to all; and, I believe, never yet drew a *tear* or a *sigh* from any well disposed auditor, unless perhaps for the sin and vanity of the speaker: So sad a thing it is, when sermons shall be such, that the most serious hearer of them shall not be able to command his *attention and his countenance too*.^{*} For can it be imagined excusable, or indeed tolerable, for one, who owns himself for *God's ambassador* to the people, to speak those things, as by his authority, of which it is hard to judge whether they detract from the honour or honesty of an ambassador most? But in a word, when the professed dispensers of the weighty matters of religion shall treat them in a way so utterly unsuitable to the grandeur of them, do they not come too near the infamous example of *Eli's* two sons, who managed their priestly office (as sacred as it was) in so wretched a manner, that it is said, *that the people abhorred the offering of the Lord*; and if so, we may be sure, abhorred *the offerers* much more?

Second, As the two forementioned ways mightily discredit the great ordinance of preaching, so they equally discredit the church itself. It is the unhappy fate of the clergy above all men, that their defects never terminate in their own persons, but still rebound upon their function; a manifest injustice certainly; where one is *the criminal*, and another must be *the sufferer*: But yet as bad as it is, from the practice of some persons, *to take occasion* to reproach the church; so on the other side, *to give occasion*, is undoubtedly much worse. And therefore, whatsoever relation to, or whatsoever interest in the church, such may pretend to, they are really greater enemies, and fouler blots to

[^{*} By a large proportion of readers, the writer is in some danger, with all his merits, of being thought the most signal example of the foible he condemns; and such must wonder or smile at the seeming unconsciousness which pervades this stricture.—Ed.]

her excellent constitution, than the most avowed maligners of it, and consequently would have disoblged her infinitely less, had they fallen in with the schismatics and fanatics in their bitterest *invectives* against her; and that even to the *renouncing her orders* (as some of them have done) and an entire quitting of her communion. For better it is, to be hissed at by a snake out of the *hedge or the dunghill*, than to be hissed at, and bitten too, by one in one's *own bosom*. But I trust, that when men shall seriously consider, how and from whence the church's enemies have took *advantage* against her, there will be found those whose *preaching* shall both answer and adorn her *constitution*, and withal make her excellent *instructions* from the *pulpit* so to *suit*, as well as *second* her incomparable *devotions* from the *desk*, that they shall neither fly out into those levities and indecencies (so justly before condemned) on the one hand; nor yet sink into that sordid, supine dulness on the other, (which our men of the Spirit so much affect, and which we by no means desire to vie with them in.) In sum, we hope, that all our church performances shall be such, that she shall as much outshine all those about her, in the soundness and sobriety of her doctrines, as in the primitive excellency of her discipline.

2. I shall now pass to the concluding inference from this whole discourse; and that shall be, to exhort those who have already heard what preparations are required to a *gospel scribe* &c. and who withal design themselves for the same employment, with the utmost seriousness to consider the reasonableness, or rather necessity of bestowing a competent and sufficient time in the universities for that purpose. And to dissuade such from a hasty relinquishment of them, (besides arguments, more than enough, drawn from the great inconveniences of so doing, and the implicit prohibition of St. Paul himself, *that he who undertakes a pastoral charge, must not be a novice*,) there is still a more co-

gent reason for the same, and that from the very nature of the thing itself: For how, naturally speaking, can there be a fitness for any great work, without preparation? And how can there be preparation, without due time and opportunity? It is observed of the *Levites*, though much of their ministry was only *shoulder work*, that they had yet a very considerable time for preparation. They were consecrated to it, by the imposition of hands, *at the age of five and twenty*; after which they employed *five years* in learning their office, and then at the *thirtieth year* they began their *Levitical* ministration; at which time also our blessed Saviour began his ministry. But now, under the gospel, when our work is ten times greater, (as well as twice ten times more spiritual than theirs was,) do we think to furnish ourselves in half the space? There was lately a company of men called *tryers*, commissioned by *Cromwell*, to judge of the abilities of such as were to be admitted into the ministry; who (forsooth) if any of *that Levitical age* presented himself to them for *their approbation*, they commonly rejected him with disdain; telling him, that if he had not been *lukewarm*, and good for nothing, he would have been disposed of in the ministry long before; and they would tell him also, that he was not only of a *legal age*, but of a *legal spirit* too; and as for things *legal*, (by which we poor mortals, and *men of the letter*, understand things *done according to law*,) this they re-nounced, and pretended to be many degrees above it; for otherwise we may be sure, that their great master of misrule *Oliver*, would never have commissioned them to serve him in that post. And now what a kind of ministry (may we imagine) such would have stocked this poor nation with, in the space of ten years more? But the truth is, for those, whose divinity was *novelty*, it ought to be no wonder, if their divines were to be novices too; and since they intended to make their *preaching* and praying an *extemporary work*, no

wonder if they were contented also with an *extemporary preparation*, and after two or three years spent in the university, ran abroad, under a pretence of *serving God in their generation*; (a term in mighty request with them) and that for reasons ('tis supposed) best known to themselves. But as for such mushroom divines, who start up so of a sudden, we do not usually find their success so good as to recommend their practice. *Hasty births* are seldom *long-lived*, but *never strong*: And therefore, I hope, that those who love the church so well, as not to be willing that she should suffer by any failure of theirs, will make it their business so to stock themselves here, as to carry from hence both learning and experience to that arduous and great work, which so eminently requires both. And the more inexcusable will an over hasty leaving this noble place of *improvement* be, by how much the greater encouragement we now have to make a longer stay in it, than we had some years since; Providence having broken the rod of (I believe) as great spiritual oppression, as was ever before exercised upon any company or corporation of men whatsoever. When some spiritual tyrants, then at the top of it, not being able to fasten any accusation upon *men's lives*, mortally maligned by them, would presently arraign and pass sentence upon their *hearts*, and deny them the proper encouragement of scholars, because, forsooth, they were not, in their refined sense, *godly and regenerate*; because they would not espouse a faction, by resorting to their *congregational, house-warming meetings*, where the brotherhood, or *sisterhood rather*, used to be so very kind to *their friends and brethren in the Lord*. Besides the barbarous, raving insolence, which those spiritual dons from the pulpit were wont to show to all sorts and degrees of men, high and low; representing every casual mishap, as a judgment from God upon such and such persons, who being implacably hated by the

party, could not, it seems, be otherwise by God himself. For* *mark the men*, said holderforth, (as I myself with several others frequently heard him.) And then having thus fixed his *mark*, and taken *aim*, he would *shoot through and through* it with a vengeance. But, I hope, things are already come to that pass, that we shall never again hear any, especially of our own body, in the very *face of loyalty and learning*, dare in this place (so renowned for both) either rail at majesty, or decry a standing ministry, and in a most unnatural and preposterous manner plant their batteries in the pulpit for the beating down of the church.

In fine, therefore, both to relieve your patience, and close up this whole discourse, since Providence, by a wonder of mercy, has now opened a way for the return of our laws and our religion, it will concern us all seriously to consider, that as the work before us is the most important, both with reference to this world, and the next, so likewise to lay to heart, that *this is the place of preparation, and now the time of it*; and consequently, that the more time and care shall be taken by us, to go from hence prepared, the *better*, no doubt, will be our *work*, and the larger our *reward*.

* Dr. H. W. violently thrust in, canon of Christ church, Oxon, by the parliament visitors, in the year 1647.

DISCOURSE VI.

OF EXTEMPORE-PRAYER.

ECCLES. v. 2.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God ; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth ; therefore let thy words be few.

WE have here the wisest of men instructing us how to behave ourselves before God in his own house ; and particularly when we address him in the most important of all duties, *prayer*. *Solomon* had the honour to be spoken to by God himself, and therefore, in all likelihood, none more fit to teach us how to speak to God :—a great privilege, certainly, for *dust* and *ashes* to be admitted to ; and therefore it will concern us to manage it so, that in these our approaches to the King of heaven, his goodness may not cause us to forget his greatness, nor (as it is but too usual for subjects to use *privilege* against *prerogative*) his honour suffer by his condescension.

In the words we have these three things observable.

1. That whosoever appears in the house of God, particularly in the way of prayer, ought to reckon himself, in a more especial manner, placed in the presence of God. 2. That the infinite distance between God and him, ought to create in him all imaginable awe, in such

his addresses to God. 3. That this reverence required of him is to consist in a serious preparation of his thoughts, and a sober government of his expressions: Neither is *his mouth to be rash, nor his heart to be hasty, in uttering any thing before God.*

These things are evidently contained in the words, and do as evidently contain the whole sense of them. But I shall gather them all into this one proposition; namely, *that Premeditation of Thought and Brevity of Expression, are the great ingredients of that reverence that is required to an acceptable and devout prayer.*

For the better handling of which, we will, in the first place, consider how it is, that *Prayer* prevails with God, for the obtaining of the things we pray for. Concerning which, I shall lay down this general rule, that the way, by which prayer prevails with God, is wholly different from that, by which it prevails with men. And to give you this more particularly,

First of all, it prevails not with God by way of *information*. With men indeed, this is the common, and with wise men the chief, and should be the only way of obtaining what we ask of them. We lay before them our wants and the misery of our condition; which being made known to them, the quality and condition of the thing asked for, and of the persons who ask it, induces them to do that for us which we petition for. But it is not so in our addresses to God; for he knows our wants and our conditions better than we ourselves: He is beforehand with all our prayers. *Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. Thou understandest my thoughts afar off.* And how then can he, who is but of yesterday, suggest any thing new to that eternal Mind! How can ignorance inform Omniscience!

Secondly, Neither does prayer prevail with God by way of *persuasion*, or working upon the affections. This indeed is the most usual and most effectual way to prevail with men; who, for the generality, are one part

reason, and nine parts *affection*. So that one of a voluble tongue and a dextrous insinuation may do what he will with vulgar minds, and with wise men too, at their weak times. But God, who is as void of passion or affection, as he is of corporeity, is not to be dealt with this way. He values not our rhetoric, nor our pathetical harangues. He who applies to God, applies to an infinite, almighty Reason, the first Mover, and therefore not to be moved, or wrought upon himself. In all passion the mind suffers, (as the very signification of the word imports,) but absolute, entire perfection cannot suffer; it is and must be immoveable, and by consequence impassible.

And therefore in the *Third* place, much less is God to be prevailed upon by *importunity*, and, as it were, wearying him into a concession of what we beg of him. Though with men, we know, this also is not unusual. A notable instance of which we have in *Luke* xviii. where the unjust judge, being with a restless vehemence sued to for justice, says thus within himself: *Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.*

In like manner, how often are beggars relieved only for their rude importunity, and not that the person who relieves them is thereby informed or satisfied of their real want, nor yet moved to pity them by all their cry and cant, but to rid himself from their vexatious din; so that to purchase his quiet by a little alms, he gratifies the beggar, but indeed *relieves* himself. But now, this way is farther from prevailing with God, than either of the former. For as Omniscience is not to be informed, so neither is Omnipotence to be wearied. We may much more easily think to clamour the sun and stars out of their courses, than to word the great Creator of them out of the steady purposes of his own will, by all the vehemence and loudness of our petitions. Men may tire themselves with their own pray-

ers, but God is not to be tired. The rapid motion and whirl of things here below, interrupts not the inviolable rest and calmness of the noble beings above. While the winds roar and bluster here in the first and second regions of the air, there is a perfect serenity in the third. Men's desires cannot control God's decrees.

And thus I have shown, that the three ways by which *men prevail with men*, in their applications to them, have no place at all, in giving any efficacy to their addresses to God.

But you will ask then, upon what account is it, that prayer becomes prevalent with God, so as to procure us the good things we pray for? I answer upon this; that it is the fulfilling of that *condition*, upon which God has freely promised to convey his blessings to men. God, of his own good will and pleasure, has thought fit to fix upon this, as the means by which he will answer the wants of mankind. As, suppose a prince should declare to any one of his subjects, that if he shall appear before him every morning in his bed-chamber, he shall receive of him a thousand talents. We must not here imagine, that the subject, by making this appearance, does either move or persuade his prince to give him such a sum of money; no, he only performs the condition of the promise, and thereby acquires a right to the thing promised. He does indeed hereby *engage* his prince to give him this sum, though he does by no means *persuade* him; or rather, to speak more strictly, the prince's own veracity is an engagement upon the prince himself, to make good his promise to him who fulfils the conditions of it.

What
is
this
Condition?
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And thus having shown how *prayer* operates towards the obtaining of the divine blessings; namely, as a *condition* appointed by God for that purpose, and not otherwise; we shall now infer also, upon what account the highest reverence of God is so indispensably

required of us in prayer, and all sort of irreverence so diametrically opposite to the very nature of it. And it will appear to be upon this, that in what degree any one lays aside his reverence of God, in the same he also quits his *dependence* upon him: Forasmuch as in every irreverent act, a man treats God as if he had indeed no need of him, and behaves himself as if he stood upon his own bottom, absolute and self-sufficient. This is the natural language, the true signification of all irreverence.

Now in all addresses, either to God or man, by speech, our reverence to them must consist of, and show itself in, these two things.

First, A careful regulation of our thoughts, that are to dictate and to govern our words; which is done by *Premeditation*: And, *Secondly*, a due ordering of our words, that are to proceed from and to express our thoughts; which is done by *Pertinence* and *Brevity of expression*.

David, directing his prayer to God, joins these two together, as the two great, integral parts of it, in *Psalms* xix. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord.* So that, it seems, his prayer adequately and entirely consisted of those two things, *meditation* and *expression*, as it were, the *matter* and *form* of that noble composure. There being no mention at all of distortion of face, sanctified grimace, solemn wink, or foaming at the mouth, and the like; all which are circumstances of prayer of a later date, and brought into request by those fantastic zealots, who had a way of praying, as astonishing to the *eyes* as to the *ears* of those that heard them.

I. Well then, the first ingredient of a pious and reverential prayer is a *previous Regulation of the Thoughts*, as the text expresses it most emphatically; *Let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God*; that is, in other words, let it not venture to

throw its crude, extemporary, misshapen conceptions in the face of infinite perfection. Let not the heart *conceive* and *bring forth* together. This is monstrous and unnatural. All abortion is from infirmity and defect. And time is required to form the issue of the mind, as well as that of the body. The fitness or unfitness of the first thoughts cannot be judged of, but by reflexion of the second: And be the invention never so fruitful, yet in the mind, as in the earth, that which is cast into it must lie hid and covered for awhile, before it can be fit to shoot forth. These are the methods of nature, and it is seldom but the acts of religion conform to them.

He who is to pray, would he seriously *judge* of the work that is before him, has more to consider of, than either his heart can hold, or his head well turn itself to. *Prayer* is one of the greatest and the hardest works that a man has to do in this world; and was ever any thing difficult or glorious achieved by a sudden cast of a thought; a flying stricture of the imagination? *Presence* of mind is indeed good, but *haste* is not so. And therefore, let this be concluded upon, that, in the business of prayer, to pretend to reverence, when there is no premeditation, is both impudence and contradiction.

Now this premeditation ought to respect these three things: 1. The *Person* whom we pray to. 2. The *Matter* of our prayers. And, 3. The *Order* and *Disposition* of them. And

1. For the *Person whom we pray to*. The same is to employ, who must needs also nonplus and astonish thy meditations, and be made the object of thy thoughts, who infinitely transcends them. For all the knowing and reasoning faculties of the soul are utterly baffled, when they offer at any idea of the great God. Nevertheless, since it is hard, if not impossible, to imprint an awe upon the affections, without suitable notions first formed in the apprehensions, we must in our

prayers endeavour, at least, to bring these as near to God as we can, by considering such of his divine perfections as have, by their effects, in a great measure, manifested themselves to our senses, and, in a much greater, to the discourses of our reason.

As first, consider with thyself, how great and glorious a Being that must needs be, that raised so vast and beautiful a fabrick as this of the world out of nothing, with the breath of his mouth, and can, with the same, reduce it to nothing again; and then consider, that this is that high, incomprehensible Being, whom thou addresseth thy pitiful self to in prayer.

Consider next, his all-searching knowledge, which looks through and through the most secret of our thoughts, ransacks every corner of the heart, ponders the most inward designs of the soul in all man's actions; and then consider, that this is the God whom thou hast to deal with in prayer; the God who observes the postures and motion of thy mind, in all thy approaches to him; and whose piercing eye it is impossible to escape, by all the tricks of the subtlest and most refined hypocrisy. And lastly, consider the fiery and implacable jealousy that he has for his honour; and that he has no other use of the whole creation but to serve the ends of it; and above all, that he will, in a most peculiar manner, *be honoured of those who draw near to him*, and will by no means suffer himself to be mocked and affronted, under a pretence of being worshipped, nor endure, that a contemptible, sinful creature, who is but a piece of living dirt at best, should at the same time *bend the knee to him, and spit in his face*. And now consider, that this is the God whom thou prayest to, and whom thou usest with such intolerable indignity, in every unworthy prayer, every saucy and familiar word, that (upon confidence of being one of *God's elect*) thou presumest to debase so great a Majesty with: And, for an instance of the dreadful curse that attends

such a daring irreverence, consider how God used *Nadab* and *Abihu* for venturing to offer *strange fire before him*; and then know, that every unhallowed, unfitting prayer is a *strange fire*; a fire that will be sure to destroy the *offering*, though mercy should spare the *offerer*. Consider these things deeply, till the consideration of them affects thy heart and humbles thy spirit, with such awful apprehensions of thy Maker, and such abject reflections upon thyself, as may lay thee in the dust before him; and know, that the lower thou fallest, the higher will thy prayer rebound; and that thou art never so fit to pray to God, as when a sense of thy own unworthiness makes thee ashamed even to speak to him.

2. The second object of premeditation is *the matter of our prayers*. For, as we are to consider, *whom we are to pray to*, so are we to consider also, *what we are to pray for*; and this requires no ordinary application of thought, to distinguish, or judge of. Men's prayers are generally dictated by their desires, and their desires are the issues of their affections; and their affections are for the most part influenced by their corruptions. The first constituent principle of a well-conceived prayer, is to know, *what not to pray for*; which the scripture assures us, that some do not, while they *pray for what they may spend upon their lusts*; asking such things as it is a contumely to God to hear, and damnation to themselves to receive. No man is to pray for any thing sinful, or directly tending to sin. No man is to pray for a *temptation*, and much less to desire God to be his *tempter*, which he would certainly be, should he, at the instance of any man's prayer, administer fuel to his sinful or absurd appetites. Nor is any one to ask of God things mean and trivial, and beneath the Majesty of heaven to be concerned about, or solemnly addressed to for. Nor, lastly, is any one to admit into his petitions things superfluous or extravagant, such as wealth, greatness, and honour; which we are so far

from being warranted to beg of God, that we are to beg his grace to despise and undervalue them ; and it were much, if the same things should be the proper objects both of our self-denial and of our prayers too ; and that we should be allowed to solicit the satisfaction, and enjoined to endeavour the mortification of the same desires.

The things that we are to pray for, are either, (1.) Things of *absolute necessity* ; or, (2.) Things of *unquestionable charity*. Of the first sort, are all spiritual graces required in us, as the indispensable conditions of our salvation ; such as are *repentance, faith, hope, charity, temperance*, and all other virtues, that are either the parts or principles of a pious life. These are to be the prime subject-matter of our prayers ; and we shall find, that nothing comes this way so easily from heaven, as those things that will assuredly bring us to it. The Spirit dictates all such petitions, and God himself is first the Author, and then the Fulfiller of them ; owning and accepting them, both as our duty, and his own production. The other sort of things, that may allowably be prayed for, are things of manifest, unquestionable charity ; such as are a competent measure of the innocent comforts of life, as health, peace, maintenance, and a success of our honest labours ; and yet, even these but conditionally, and with perfect resignation to the will and wisdom of the Sovereign Disposer of all that belongs to us ; who, (if he finds it more for his honour to have us serve him with sick, crazy, languishing bodies, with poverty, and lastly, with our country all in a flame about our ears) ought in all this, and much more, to over-rule our desires into an absolute acquiescence in his all-wise disposal of things ; and to convince us, that our prayers are sometimes best answered, when our desires are most opposed.

In fine, to state the whole matter of our prayers in one word ; nothing can be fit for us to pray for, but what is fit and honourable for our great *Master of re-*

quests, Jesus Christ himself, to intercede for. This is to be the unchangeable rule and measure of all our petitions. And then, if Christ is to convey these our petitions to his Father, can any one dare to make him, who was purity itself, an Advocate for his lusts? Him who was nothing but meekness and humility, his providore for such things as can only feed his pride, and flush his ambition? No, certainly; when we come as suppliants to the throne of grace, where Christ sits as Intercessor at God's right hand, nothing can be fit to proceed out of our mouth, but what is fit to pass through his.

3. The *last* thing, that calls for a previous meditation to our prayers, is the *disposition* of them. For though God does not command us to set off our prayers with dress and artifice, to flourish it in trope and metaphor, to beg our daily bread in blank verse, or to show any thing of the *poet* in our devotions, but *indigence* and *want*; I say, though God is far from requiring such things in our prayers, yet he requires that we should manage them with sense and reason. Fineness is not expected, but decency is; and though we cannot declaim, as orators, yet he will have us speak like men, and tender him the results of that understanding and judgment that essentially constitute a rational nature.

But I shall briefly cast what I have to say upon this particular, into these following assertions.

(1.) That nothing can express our reverence to God in prayer, that would pass for irreverence towards a great man. Let any subject tender his prince a petition, fraught with nonsense and incoherence, confusion and impertinence; and can he expect that majesty should answer it with any thing but a deaf ear, a frowning eye, or, at best, vouchsafe it any other reward, but by a gracious oblivion to forgive the person, and forget the petition?

(2.) Nothing absurd, and such as a wise man would

despise, can be acceptable to God in prayer. *Solomon* expressly tells us in *Ecclesiastes* v. that *God has no pleasure in fools*; nor is it possible that an infinite Wisdom should: The scripture all along expresses *sin* and *wickedness* by the name of *folly*; and therefore, certainly folly is too near a kin to it, to find any approbation from God in so great a duty: It is the simplicity of the *heart*, and not of the *head*, that is the best inditer of our petitions. That which proceeds from the latter, is undoubtedly *the sacrifice of fools*; and God is never more weary of *sacrifice*, than when a fool is the priest, and folly the oblation. And

(3.) Nothing rude, slight, and careless; or, indeed, less than the very best that a man can offer, can be acceptable or pleasing to God in prayer. *If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? If ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil? Offer it now to thy governor, and see whether he will be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of Hosts? Mal. i.* God rigidly expects a return of his own gifts; and where he has given ability, will be served by acts proportionable to it. And he who has parts to raise and propagate his own honour by, but none to employ in the worship of him that gave them, does (as I may so express it) refuse to wear God's livery in his own service, adds sacrilege to prophaneness, strips and starves his devotions, and, in a word, falls directly under the dint of that curse, denounced in the first of *Malachi*; *Cursed be the deceiver, that hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing.* The same is here, both the deceiver and the deceived too; for God very well knows *what* he gives men, and *why*; and where he has bestowed judgment, learning, and utterance, will not endure that men should be accurate in their discourse, and loose in their devotions; or think, that the great *Author of every perfect gift* will be put off with confused talk, babble, and tautology.

And thus much for the *disposition* of our prayers, which certainly requires precedent thought, and meditation. God has declared himself the *God of order* in all things, and will have it observed, in what he commands others, as well as in what he does himself. *Order* is the great rule, by which God made the world, and by which he still governs it: Nay, the world itself is nothing else; and all this glorious system of things is but the chaos put into order: And how then can God, who has so eminently owned himself concerned for this excellent thing, brook such confusion, as the slovenly and profane negligence some treat him with, in their most solemn addresses to him? All which is the unavoidable consequent of unpreparedness and want of premeditation, without which, whosoever presumes to pray, cannot be so properly said to *approach* to, as to *break in* upon God. And surely, he who is so hardy, has no reason in the earth to expect that the success, which follows his prayers, should be greater than the preparation that goes before them.

Now from what has been hitherto discoursed of this first grand qualification of a devout prayer, to wit, *premeditation of thought*, what can be so naturally and so usefully inferred, as the high expediency, or rather the absolute necessity of a set form of prayer, to guide our devotions by? We have lived in an age that has despised and counteracted all the principles and practices of the primitive Christians, in taking the measures of their duty both to God and man, and of their behaviour both in matters civil and religious; but in nothing more scandalously, than in their vile abuse of the great duty of prayer; concerning which, though it may with the clearest truth be affirmed, that there has been no church yet, of any account in the Christian world, but what has governed its public worship of God by a liturgy, yet these enthusiastic innovators, the bold and blind reformers of all antiquity, and *wiser*, than the whole catholic church besides, introduced into

In great emergencies men
need no form of prayer.

the room of it, a ^{sa}vcy, senseless, extemporary way of speaking to God, affirming that this was a *praying by the Spirit*, and that the use of all set forms was *stinting of the Spirit*; a pretence, I confess, popular and plausible enough with such idiots as take the sound of words for the sense of them. But, for the full confutation of it, (which, I hope, shall be done both easily and briefly too,) I shall advance this one assertion in direct contradiction to that; namely,

That the praying by a set form is not a stinting of the Spirit; and the praying extempore truly and properly is so.

For the proving and making out of which, we will first consider, *what it is to pray by the Spirit*; a thing much talked of, but not so convenient for the talkers of it, and pretenders to it, to have it rightly stated. In short, it includes in it these two things:

First, A praying with the heart, which is sometimes called the *spirit* or *inward man*; and so it is properly opposed to hypocritical lip-devotions, in which the *heart* or *spirit* does not go along with a man's words.

Second, It includes in it also a praying according to the rules prescribed by God's *Holy Spirit*, and held forth to us in his word, which was both dictated and confirmed by this Spirit; and so it is opposed to the praying unlawfully or unwarrantably; and that, either in respect of the matter or manner of our prayers: As, when we desire of God such things, or in such a way, *as the Spirit of God*, speaking in his holy word, does by no means warrant. So that to *pray by the Spirit*, signifies neither more nor less, but to pray knowingly, heartily, and affectionately, for such things, and in such a manner, as the Holy Ghost, in scripture, either commands or allows of. As for any other kind of *praying by the Spirit*, upon the best enquiry that I can make into these matters, I can find none. And if some say, (as I know they both impudently and blasphemously do), that to *pray by the Spirit* is to have the Spirit im-

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mediately inspiring them, (and so dictating their prayers to them) let them either produce plain scripture, or do a miracle to prove this by.— But till then, he who shall consider what kind of prayers these pretenders to *the Spirit* have been notable for, will find, that they have as little cause to father their prayers, as their practices, upon the Spirit of God. Romano
8-26-

These two things are certain, and I do particularly recommend them to your observation: One, that this way of *praying by the Spirit* (as they call it) was begun, and first brought into use here in *England*, in queen *Elizabeth's* days, by a *popish* priest and *Dominican* fryar, one *Faithful Commyn* by name, who, counterfeiting himself a protestant, and a zealot of the highest form, set up this new spiritual way of praying, with a design to bring the people first to a contempt, and from thence to an utter disuse of our *Common-Prayer*, which he still reviled as only a translation of the Mass; thereby to distract men's minds, and to divide our church. And this he did with such success, that we have lived to see the effects of his labours in the utter subversion of church and state. Which hellish negociation, when this malicious hypocrite came to *Rome* to give the pope an account of, he received of him (as so notable a service well deserved) besides a *thousand* thanks, *two thousand* ducats for his pains. So that now you see here the original of this extempore-way of praying by the Spirit. The other thing that I would observe to you, is, that in the neighbour nation of *Scotland*, one of the greatest* monsters of men, that, I believe, ever lived, and actually in league with the devil, was yet, by the confession of all that heard him, the most excellent at this extempore-way of *praying by the Spirit*, of any man in his time; none was able to come near him, or to compare with him. But surely now, he who shall venture to ascribe the prayers of such a wretch, made up of adulteries, incest,

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* Major John Weyer. See *Ravillac Rediviv*.

witchcraft, and other villanies, not to be named, to the *Spirit of God*, may as well strike in with the *Pharisees*, and ascribe the miracles of Christ to the devil. And thus having shown, both what ought to be meant by *praying by the Spirit*, and what ought not, cannot be meant by it; let us now see whether a *set form*, or this *extempore way*, be the greater hinderer and stinter of it: In order to which I shall lay down these three assertions.

mind may not act on things at once but. pray is not altogether the act of the mind.

1. That the mind of man is but of a limited nature in all its workings, and consequently cannot supply two distinct faculties at the same time, to the same height of operation. 2. That the finding expressions for prayer is the proper business of the brain and the invention; and that the finding devotion and affection to accompany those expressions is properly the business of the heart. 3. That this devotion and affection is indispensably required in *Prayer*, as the principal part of it, and that in which the spirituality of it does most properly consist.

Now from these three things put together, this must naturally and necessarily follow; that as *spiritual prayer* or *praying by the Spirit*, taken in the right sense of the word, consists properly in that affection and devotion that the heart exercises and employs in the work of prayer; so, whatsoever gives the soul scope and liberty to exercise this affection and devotion, that does most effectually help and enlarge the spirit of prayer; and whatsoever diverts the soul from employing such affection and devotion, that does most directly stint it. Accordingly, let this now be our rule, whereby to judge of the efficacy of a *set form*, and of the *extempore way*, in the present business. As for a *set form*, in which the words are prepared to our hands, the soul has nothing to do but to attend to the work of raising the affections and devotions to go along with those words: So that all the powers of the soul are took up in applying the *heart* to this great duty; and it is

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the exercise of the *heart* that is truly a *praying by the Spirit*. On the contrary, in all extempore-prayer, the faculties of the soul are called off from dealing with the *heart* and the affections; and that both in the speaker and in the hearer.

And first for the minister, who utters such extempore-prayers. He is wholly employing his invention, both to conceive matter and find words to clothe it in. This is certainly the work which takes up his *mind* in this exercise: And since the nature of man's mind is such, that it cannot with the same vigour, at the same time, attend to the work of invention, and that of raising the affections also; nor measure out the same supply of spirits and intention for the carrying on the operations of the *head* and of the *heart* too; it is certain, that while the head is so much employed, the heart must be very little, and perhaps not at all; and consequently, if to *pray by the Spirit* be to pray with the heart and the affections, it is also as certain, that while a man prays *extempore*, he does *not pray by the Spirit*: Nay, the very truth of it is, that while he is so doing, he is not *praying* at all, but he is *studying*, he is beating his *brain*, while he should be drawing out his *affections*.

And then for the people that are to join with him in such prayers; it is manifest, that they, not knowing beforehand what the minister will say, must presently busy and bestir their minds, both to apprehend and understand the meaning of what they hear, and withal to judge whether it be of such a nature as to be fit for them to concur with him *in*. So that the people also, are, by this course, put to *study* and to employ their apprehending and judging faculties, while they should be exerting their affections and devotions; and consequently, by this means the *spirit of prayer is stinted*, as well in the congregation that follows, as in the minister who first conceives a prayer, after their extempore-way; which is a truth so self-evident, that it is

impossible that it should need any further arguments to make it out.

The sum of all is this; that since a set form of prayer leaves the soul wholly free to employ its affections and devotions in which *the spirit of prayer* does most properly consist, it follows, that *the spirit of prayer* is thereby, in a singular manner, promoted and enlarged: And since, on the other hand, the extempore-way takes off the soul from employing its *affections*, and engages it chiefly, if not wholly, about the use of its invention, it as plainly follows, that the *spirit of prayer* is, by this means, unavoidably cramped, and (to use their own word) *stinted*; which was the proposition that I undertook to prove. But there are two things, I confess, that are extremely *stinted* by a set form of prayer, and equally *furthered* and *enlarged* by the extempore-way, which, without all doubt, is the true cause why the former is so much decried, and the latter so much extolled, by the men whom we are now pleading with. The first of which is *pride* and *ostentation*; the other *faction* and *sedition*.

1. And first for *pride*. I do not in the least question, but the chief design of such as use the extempore-way, is to amuse *the unthinking rabble* with an admiration of their gifts; their whole devotion proceeding from no other principle, but only a *love to hear themselves talk*. And, I believe, it would put *Lucifer* himself hard to it, to out-vie the pride of one of those fellows, pouring out his extempore-stuff amongst his ignorant, whining, factious followers, listening to and applauding his copious flow and cant, with the ridiculous accents of their impertinent groans. And, the truth is, extempore-prayer, even when best and most dexterously performed, is nothing else but a business of invention and wit, (such as it is,) and requires no more to it, but a teeming imagination, a bold front, and a ready expression, and deserves much the same commendation, (were it not in a matter too *serious*, to be

sudden upon,) which is due to *extempore*-verses; only with this difference, that there is necessary to these latter, a competent measure of wit and learning; whereas the former may be done with very little wit, and no learning at all.

And now, can any sober person think it reasonable, that the devotions of a whole congregation should be under the conduct, and at the mercy of a pert, empty, conceited *holder-forth*, whose chief, if not sole, intent is to vaunt his spiritual clack, and (as I may so speak) to *pray prizes*; whereas prayer is a duty that recommends itself to the acceptance of Almighty God, by no other qualification so much, as by the profoundest humility that a man can possibly have of himself?

Certainly the extemporizing faculty is never more out of its element, than in the pulpit; though even here, it is much more excusable in a sermon, than in a prayer; forasmuch as in that a man addresses himself but to men, men like himself, whom he may therefore make bold with, as, no doubt, for so doing they will also make bold with him. Besides, the peculiar advantage attending all such sudden conceptions, that as they are quickly born, so they quickly die; it being seldom known, where the speaker has so very *fluent* an *invention*, but the hearer also has the gift of as *fluent* a *memory*.

2. The other thing that has been hitherto so little befriended by a set form of *prayer*, and so very much by the extempore-way, is *faction* and *sedition*. It has been always found an excellent way of girning at the government in *scripture phrase*. And we all know the common dialect, in which the great masters of this art used to pray for the king, and which may justly pass for only a cleanlier and more refined kind of libelling him in *the Lord*; as *that God will turn his heart and open his eyes*; as if he were a *pagan*, yet to be converted to Christianity; with many other sly, virulent, and malicious insinuations, which we may

every day hear of from (those mints of treason and rebellion) their conventicles ; and for which, and a great deal less, some princes and governments would make them not only eat their words, but the tongue that spoke them too. In fine, let all their extempore-harangues be duly weighed, and you shall find a *spirit* of pride, faction, and sedition, predominant in them all ; the only *spirit*, which those impostors do really and indeed *pray by*.

I have been so much the longer and the earnestest against this intoxicating, bewitching cheat of extempore-prayer, being fully satisfied in my conscience, that it has been all along the devil's master-piece and prime engine to overthrow our church by. For I look upon this as a most unanswerable truth, that whosoever renders the public worship of God contemptible amongst us, must in the same degree discredit our whole religion. And, I hope, I have also proved it to be a truth altogether as clear, that this extempore-way naturally brings all the contempt upon the worship of God, that both the *folly* and *faction* of men can possibly expose it to ; and therefore, as a thing neither subservient to the true purposes of religion, nor grounded upon principles of reason, nor lastly, suitable to the practice of antiquity, ought by all means to be cast out of every sober and well ordered church ; or that will be sure to throw the church itself out of doors.

And thus I have at length finished what I had to say of the first ingredient of a pious and reverential prayer, which was *Premeditation of Thought*, prescribed to us in these words, *Let not thy mouth be rash, nor thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God* ; which excellent words and most wise advice of *Solomon*, whosoever can reconcile to the expediency, decency, or usefulness of extempore-prayer, I shall acknowledge him a man of greater parts, than Solomon himself.

DISCOURSE VII.

OF EXTEMPORE-PRAYER.

ECCLES. v. 2.

God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few.

THE other ingredient of a reverential and duly qualified prayer, is a *pertinent Brevity of Expression*, mentioned and recommended in that part of the text; *Therefore let thy words be few.*

II. Concerning which, we shall observe, first in general, that to be able to express our minds briefly, and fully too, is absolutely the greatest commendation that speech is capable of; such a mutual communication of our thoughts being (as I may so speak) the next approach to *intuition*, and the nearest imitation of the converse of blessed *spirits made perfect*, that our condition in this world can possibly raise us too. Certainly the greatest conceptions that ever issued from the mind of men, have been couched under a few, close, home, and significant words.

But to derive the credit of this way of speaking from an example infinitely greater than the greatest human wisdom, was it not authorized and ennobled by God himself in his making of the world? Was not the work of all the six days transacted in so many words? There was no circumlocution, or amplification, in the case; which makes the rhetorician *Longinus*, in his

book of the *Loftiness of Speech*, so much admire the grandeur of *Moses's* style in his first chapter of *Genesis*,
Ὁ τῶν Ἰσραήλων θεσμοθέτης οὐχ ὁ τυχῶν ἀνὴρ, ἐπειδὴ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ δύναμιν κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐγνώρισε κατέφηνεν: *The lawgiver of the Jews was no ordinary man; because he set forth the divine Power suitably to the majesty and greatness of it.* But how did he this?

Why, for that (*says he*) in the very entrance of his laws, he gives us this short and present account of the whole creation: God said, *Let there be light, and there was light; let there be an earth, a sea, and a firmament, and there was so.* So that all this high eulogy given by this heathen of *Moses*, sprang only from the majestic brevity of this one expression; an expression so suited to the greatness of a Creator, and so expressive of his creative power, as a power infinitely above all control, or possibility of finding the least obstacle or delay in achieving its most stupendous works. Heaven, and earth, and all the host of both, as it were, dropt from his mouth; and nature itself was but the product of a word; a word not designed to express, but to constitute and give a being.

This was God's way of speaking in his first forming of the universe: And was it not so, in the next grand instance of his power, his governing of it too? For are not the great instruments of government, his laws, drawn up and digested into a few sentences? The whole body of them containing but ten commandments, and some of those commandments not so many words? Nay, and have we not these also brought into yet a narrower compass by him who best understood them? *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and thy neighbour as thyself.* Precepts, nothing like the tedious, endless, confused trash of human laws; laws so numerous, that they not only exceed men's practice, but also their arithmetic; and so voluminous,

that no mortal head, nor shoulders neither, must ever pretend themselves able to *bear* them. In God's laws the words are few, the sense vast and infinite. In human laws, you shall be sure to have words enough; but, for the most part, to discern the sense and reason of them, you had need read them with a microscope.

And thus having shown how the Almighty utters himself, when he speaks, and that upon the greatest occasions; let us now descend from heaven to earth, from God to man, and show, that it is no presumption for us to conform our words, as well as our actions, to the supreme pattern, and according to our poor measure, to imitate the wisdom that we adore. And for this, has it not been noted by the best observers and the ablest judges, that the wisdom of any people has been most seen in the proverbs and short sayings commonly received amongst them? And what is a proverb, but the experience and observation of several ages, gathered up into one expression? The scripture vouches *Solomon* for the *wisest of men*, and they are his *proverbs* that prove him so. The seven wise men of *Greece*, so famous all the world over, acquired all that fame, each of them by a single sentence, consisting of two or three words. And *γνώθι σεαυτὸν* still lives and flourishes in the mouths of all, while many vast volumes are sunk into dust and utter oblivion. And then for books, we shall generally find, that the most excellent, in any art or science, have been still the smallest and most compendious: And this not without ground; for it is an argument that the author was a master of what he wrote, and had a clear notion and a full comprehension of the subject before him. For the *reason* of things lies in a little compass, if the mind could at any time be so happy as to light upon it. Most of the writings in the world are but illustration and rhetoric, which signifies as much as nothing to a mind eager in pursuit after the causes

and philosophical truth of things. It is the work of fancy to *enlarge*, but of judgment to *contract*; and therefore this must needs be as far above the other, as judgment is a nobler faculty than fancy or imagination. All philosophy is reduced to a few principles, and those principles comprized in a few propositions. And as the whole structure of *speculation* rests upon three or four axioms or maxims, so that of practice also bears upon a very small number of rules. And surely there was never yet any *rule* or *maxim* that filled a volume, or took up a week's time to be got by heart. No; these are the *apices rerum*, the very spirit and life of things extracted and abridged; just as all the lines, drawn from the vastest circumference, do at length meet in the smallest of things, a *point*; and it is but a very little piece of wood, with which a true artist will measure all the timber in the world. The truth is, there could be no such thing as art or science, could not the mind of man gather the general natures of things out of the numberless heap of particulars, and then bind them up into such short aphorisms, that so they may be made portable to the memory, and thereby become ready for the judgment to make use of, as there shall be occasion.

In fine, brevity and succinctness of speech is that which, in philosophy, we call *maxim* and first principle; in the counsels and resolves of practical wisdom and the deep mysteries of religion, *oracle*; and lastly, in matters of wit and the finenesses of imagination, *epigram*. All of them severally, and in their kinds the greatest and the noblest things that the mind of man can show the force and dexterity of its faculties in.

And now, if this be the perfection of speech in all other things, can we assign any true, solid reason, why it should not be so likewise in prayer? Nay, is there not rather the clearest reason imaginable, why it should be much more so? Since most

of the forementioned things are but addresses to a human understanding, which may need as many words as may fill a volume, to make it understand the truth of one line. Whereas prayer is an address to that eternal Mind, which (as we have shown before) such as rationally invoke, pretend not to inform. Nevertheless, since the nature of man is such, that while we are yet in the body, our reverence of God must of necessity proceed in some analogy to the reverence that we show to the grandees of this world, we will here see what the judgment of all wise men is, concerning fewness of words, when we appear as suppliants before our earthly superiors; and we shall find, that they generally allow it to import these three things: 1. *Modesty*. 2. *Discretion*. And 3. Height of *Respect to the person addressed*.

1. And first, for *Modesty*. Modesty is a kind of shame or bashfulness, proceeding from the sense a man has of his own defects, compared with the perfections of him whom he comes before. And that which is modesty towards men, is devotion towards God. It is a virtue that makes a man unwilling to be seen, and fearful to be heard; and yet for that very cause, never fails to make him, both seen with favour, and heard with attention. It loves not many words, nor indeed needs them. For modesty addressing to any one of a generous worth and honour, is sure to have that man's honour for its advocate, and his generosity for its intercessor. And how then is it possible for such a virtue to run out into words? Loquacity storms the ear, but modesty takes the heart; that is troublesome, this gentle, but irresistible. Much speaking is always the effect of confidence; and confidence still presupposes, and springs from the persuasion that a man has of his own worth: Both of them, certainly, very unfit qualifications for a petitioner.

2. The second thing that naturally shows itself in paucity of words, is *Discretion*; and particularly, that

prime and eminent part of it that consists in a care of offending ; which *Solomon* assures us, that in much speaking, it is hardly possible for us to avoid : *Prov. x. 19. In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.* It requiring no ordinary skill for a man to make his tongue run by rule, and, at the same time, to give it both its lesson and its liberty too. For seldom or never is there much spoke, but something or other had better been not spoke ; there being nothing that the mind of man is so apt to kindle, and take distaste at, as at words : And therefore, whensoever any one comes to prefer a suit to another, no doubt, the fewer of them the better ; since, where so very little is said, it is sure to be either candidly *accepted*, or, which is next, easily *excused* : But, at the same time, to petition, and to provoke too, is certainly very preposterous.

3. The third thing, that *Brevity of Speech* commends itself by, in all petitionary addresses, is a peculiar *Respect to the person addressed* : For, whosoever petitions his superior, in such a manner, does, by his very so doing, confess him better able to understand, than he himself can be to express his own case. He owns him, as a patron, of a preventing judgment and goodness, and, upon that account, able, not only to answer, but also to anticipate his requests. For, according to the most natural interpretation of things, this is to ascribe to him a sagacity so piercing, that it were presumption to inform ; and a benignity so great, that it were needless to importune him. And can there be a more winning deference to a superior, than to treat him under such a character ? Or can any thing be imagined so naturally fit and efficacious, both to enforce the petition and to endear the petitioner ? A short petition to a great man is not only a suit to him for his favour, but also a panegyric upon his parts.

And thus I have given you the three commendatory qualifications of brevity of speech, in our applications to the great ones of the world. Concerning which, as

I showed before, that it was impossible for us to form our addresses, even to God himself, but with some proportion to those that we make to our fellow mortals in a condition much above us ; so it is certain, that whatsoever the general judgment and consent of mankind allows to be declarative of our honour to those, must (only with due allowance of the difference of the object) as really and properly signify that honour and adoration due from us to the great God ; and, consequently, what we have said for brevity of speech, with respect to the former, ought equally to conclude for it, with relation to him too.

But to argue more immediately to the point before us : I shall now produce five arguments, enforcing brevity, and cashiering all prolixity of speech, with peculiar reference to our addresses to God.

And the *First* argument shall be taken from this consideration : *That there is no reason allegible for prolixity of speech, that is at all applicable to prayer.* For whosoever uses multiplicity of words must of necessity do it for one of these three purposes ; either to *inform* or *persuade*, or lastly, to *weary* and *overcome* the person whom he directs his discourse to. But the very foundation of what I had to say upon this subject, was laid by me, in demonstrating that prayer could not possibly prevail with God any of these ways : For as much as being omniscient, he could not be informed ; and, being void of passion or affections, he could not be persuaded ; and, lastly, being infinitely great, he could not, by any importunity, be overcome ; and if so, what use then can there be of rhetoric, harangue, or multitude of words in prayer ? For, if designed for information, must it not be infinitely sottish and unreasonable, to go about to inform him, who can be ignorant of nothing ? Or to persuade him, whose unchangeable nature makes it impossible for him to be wrought upon ? Or, lastly, by long and much speaking, to think to weary him out, whose infinite power, all

the strength of men and angels is not able to encounter or stand before? So that the truth is, by loquacity and prolixity a man does indeed (whether he thinks so or no) rob God of the honour of those three great attributes. For, on the other side, all the usefulness of long speech in human converse is founded only upon the imperfections of human nature. For he whose knowledge is at best but limited, and whose intellect, both in apprehending and judging, proceeds by a small diminutive light, cannot but receive an additional light, by the conceptions of another clearly expressed, and by such expression conveyed to his apprehension. And he again, whose nature subjects him to want and weakness, and consequently to hopes and fears, cannot but be moved this way, or that way, according as objects suitable to those passions shall be dexterously represented, and set before his imagination, by the arts of speaking; which is that we call *persuasion*. And, lastly, he whose soul and body receive their activity from, and perform all their functions by, the mediation of the spirits, which ebb and flow, consume, and are renewed again, cannot but find himself very uneasy upon any tedious, verbose application made to him; and that sometimes to such a degree, that through mere fatigue, and even against judgment and interest both, a man shall surrender himself as conquered, to the overbearing vehemence of such solicitations: For when they ply him so fast, and pour in upon him so thick, they cannot but wear and waste the spirits, as unequal to so pertinacious a charge; and this is properly to weary a man. But now all weariness, we know, presupposes weakness; and consequently every long, importunate petition is truly and properly a force upon him that is pursued with it; it is a following blow after blow upon the mind and affections, and may, for the time, pass for real, though short persecution.

This is the condition of human nature; and prolixity of speech is still the great engine to attack it by,

either in its *blind* or *weak* side ; and, I think, I may venture to affirm, that it is seldom that any man is prevailed upon by words, but upon a true and philosophical estimate of the whole matter, he is either *deceived* or *wearied*, before he is so, and parts with the thing desired upon the very same terms, that either a child parts with a jewel for an apple, or a man parts with his sword when it is forcibly wrested from him ; and that he who obtains what he has been rhetorically or importunately begging for, goes away really a conqueror, and triumphantly carrying off the spoils of his neighbour's understanding, or his will ; baffling the former, or wearying the latter into a grant of his restless petitions.

And now, if this be the case, when any one comes with a tedious, long-winded harange to God, may not God properly answer him with those words : *Surely thou thinkest I am altogether such an one as thyself?* And perhaps, upon a due and rational examination of all the follies and indecencies that men are apt to be guilty of in prayer, they will all be found resolvable into this one thing, namely, *that men, when they pray, take God to be such an one as themselves*, and so treat him accordingly : The malignity and mischief of which gross mistake may reach farther than possibly at first they can well be aware of. For if it be idolatry to pray to God the Father, represented under the shape of a man, can it be at all better to pray to him as represented under the weakness of a man ? Nay, if the misrepresentation of the object makes the idolatry, certainly by how much the worse and more scandalous the misrepresentation is, by so much the grosser must be the idolatry. To confirm which, we may add this consideration, that Christ himself, even now in his glorified estate, wears the body and consequently the shape of a man, though he is far from any of his infirmities ; and therefore, no doubt, to represent God to ourselves under these latter, must needs be more ab-

surd and irreligious, than to represent him under the former. But to one particular of the preceding discourse some may object ; that if God's omniscience, by rendering it impossible for him to be informed, be a sufficient reason against prolixity of prayer, it will follow, that is equally a reason against the using any words at all in prayer, since the proper use of words is to inform the person whom we speak to ; and, consequently, where information is impossible, words must needs be superfluous.

To which I answer, first by concession, that if the sole use of words were to *inform the Person whom we speak to*, the consequence would be good, and equally conclude against the use of any words at all in prayer. But therefore, in the second place, I deny information to be the sole and adequate use of speech, or indeed any use of them, when either the person spoken to needs not be informed, and withal is known not to need it, as sometimes it falls out with men ; or, when he is incapable of being informed, as it is always with God. But the proper use of words, whensoever we speak to God in prayer, is thereby to pay him *honour and obedience* ; God having, by an express precept, enjoined us the use of words in prayer, commanding us in *Ps. l. 15.* and many other scriptures, *to call upon him* ; and in *Luke xl. When we pray, to say, Our Father, &c.* But no where has he commanded us to do this with multiplicity of words ; and though it must be confessed, that we may sometimes answer this command by mental or inward prayer, yet since these words, in their most proper signification, import a vocal address, there is no doubt, but the direct design of the command is to enjoin this also, wheresoever there is ability to perform it. So that we see here the necessity of *vocal prayer*, founded upon the authority of a divine precept ; whereas, for *long prolix prayer*, no such precept can be produced ; and consequently the divine omniscience may be a sufficient reason against

multiplicity of words in prayer, and yet conclude nothing absolutely against the bare use of them. Nevertheless, that we may not seem to allege bare command, unseconded by reason, (which yet, in the divine commands, it is impossible to do,) there is this great reason for the use of words in prayer, without the least pretence of informing the person whom we pray to; and that is, to *acknowledge those wants* before God, that we supplicate for a relief of; it being very proper and rational to own a thing even to him who knew it before: Forasmuch as this is so far from offering to communicate to him the thing so acknowledged, that it rather presupposes in him an antecedent knowledge of it, and comes in only as a subscription to the reality and truth of such a knowledge. For to *acknowledge* a thing, in the first sense of the word, does by no means signify a design of notifying that to another, but is truly a man's passing sentence upon himself and his own condition; there being no reason in the world for a man to expect that God should relieve those wants that he himself will not own or take notice of, any more than for a man to hope for a pardon of those sins that he cannot find in his heart to confess. And yet, I suppose, no man in his right senses does or can imagine, that God is brought to the knowledge of those sins by any such confession.

And so much for the clearing of this objection; and, in the whole, for the first argument produced by us for *Brevity*; namely, *that all the reasons that can be assigned for prolixity of speech, in our converse with men, cease, and become no reasons for it at all, when we are to pray to God.*

The *Second* argument for *paucity of words* in prayer shall be taken from the *paucity of those things* necessary to be prayed for. And surely, where few things are necessary, few words should be sufficient. For where the *matter* is not commensurate to the words, all speaking is but tautology; that being really tautol-

ogy, where the same thing is repeated, though under never so much variety of expression : as it is but the same man still, though he appears every day, or every hour, in a new and different suit of clothes.

The adequate subject of our prayers (I showed at first) comprehended in it *things of necessity* and of *charity*. As to the first, I know nothing absolutely necessary, but *grace* here, and *glory* hereafter ; and for the other, we know what the apostle says : *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content*. Nature is satisfied with a little, and grace with less. And now, if the matter of our prayers lies within so narrow a compass, why should the dress and outside of them diffuse itself into so disproportioned a largeness ? By reason of which our words will be forced to hang loose and light, without any matter to support them ; much after the same rate that it is said to be in transubstantiation ; where *accidents* are left in the lurch by their proper *subject*, that gives them the slip, and so leaves those poor slender beings to uphold and shift for themselves.

In brevity of speech, a man does not so much speak words as things ; things in their naked truth, and stripped of their rhetorical mask and fallacious gloss ; and therefore, in *Athens*, they circumscribed the pleadings of their orators by a strict law, cutting off prologues and epilogues, and commanding them to an immediate representation of the case, by a succinct declaration of mere matter of fact ; and this was indeed to speak things fit for a judge to hear, because it argued the pleader also a judge of what was fit for him to speak.

And now, why should not this be both decency and devotion too, when we come to plead for our poor souls before the great tribunal of heaven ? It was the saying of *Solomon*, *A word to the wise* ; and if so, there can be no necessity of many words to him, who is Wisdom itself. For can any man think, that God de-

lights to hear him make speeches, and to show his parts, (as the word is,) or to jumble a multitude of misapplied scripture sentences together, interlarded with a frequent, nauseous repetition of *Ah Lord!* which some call *exercising their gifts*, but with a greater exercise of their hearers' patience? Nay, does not he present his Maker, not only with a more decent, but also a more liberal oblation, who tenders him much in a little, and brings him his whole heart wrapt up in three or four words, than he who with full mouth and loud lungs, sends up whole vollies of articulate breath to the throne of grace? For neither in the esteem of God or man, ought multitude of words to pass for any more: In the present case, no doubt, God accepts of the former, as infinitely a more valuable offering than the latter. As that subject pays his prince a much nobler tribute, who tenders him a purse of gold, than he who brings him a whole cart-load of farthings, in which there is weight without worth, and number without account.

The *Third* argument for brevity of speech in prayer, shall be taken from the very *nature and condition of the person who prays*, which makes it impossible for him to keep up the same fervour and attention in a long prayer, that he may in a short. For as I first observed that the mind of man cannot, with the same vigour, attend two several objects at the same time, so neither can it, with the same earnestness, exert itself upon one and the same object for any long time; great intention of mind spending the spirits too fast to continue its first freshness and agility long. For while the soul is a retainer to the elements, and a sojourner in the body, it must be content to submit its own quickness and spirituality to the dulness of its vehicle, and to comply with the pace of its inferior companion; just like a man shut up in a coach, who, while he is so, must be willing to go no faster than the motion of the coach will carry him. He who does all by the help of

those subtle, refined parts of matter called spirits, must not think to persevere at the same pitch of acting, while those principles of activity flag. No man begins and ends a long journey with the same pace.

But now, when prayer has lost its due fervour and attention, (which indeed are the very vitals of it,) it is but the *carcass* of a prayer, and, consequently, must needs be loathsome to God: Nay, though the greatest part of it should be carried on with an actual attention, yet if that attention fails to enliven any one part of it, the whole is but a joining of the living and the *dead* together; for which conjunction the *dead* is not at all the better, but the *living* very much the worse. It is not length, nor copiousness of language, that is devotion, any more than bulk and bigness is valour, or *flesh* the measure of the *spirit*. A short sentence may be oftentimes a large and a mighty prayer. Devotion so managed, being like water in a well, where you have fulness in a little compass; which surely is much nobler than the same carried out into many petit, creeping rivulets, with *length* and *shallowness* together. Let him who prays, bestow all that strength, fervour, and attention, upon shortness and significance, that would otherwise run out, and lose itself in luxuriancy of speech to no purpose. Let not his tongue outstrip his heart, nor presume to carry a message to the throne of grace, while that stays behind. Let him not think to support so weighty a duty with a languishing, and be-jaded devotion; to avoid which, let a man contract his expression, where he cannot enlarge his affection, still remembering, that nothing can be more absurd in itself, nor more unacceptable to God, than for one engaged in the great work of prayer, to hold on *speaking*, after he has left off *praying*; and to keep the *lips* at work, when the *spirit* can do no more.

The *Fourth* argument for conciseness of speech in prayer, shall be drawn from this, that it is *the most*

natural and lively way of expressing the utmost agonies and outcries of the soul to God upon a quick, pungent sense, either of a pressing necessity, or an approaching calamity, which, we know, are generally the chief occasions of prayer, and the most effectual motives to bring men upon their knees, in a vigorous application of themselves to this great duty. A person ready to sink under his wants, has neither time, nor heart, to rhetoricate, or make flourishes. No man begins a long grace, when he is ready to starve: Such an one's prayers are like the relief he needs, quick and sudden: He is like a man in torture upon the rack, whose pains are too acute to let his words be many, and whose desires of deliverance too impatient to delay the things he begs for, by the manner of begging it.

It is a common saying; *If a man does not know how to pray, let him go to sea, and that will teach him.* And we have a notable instance of what kind of prayers men are taught in that school, even in the disciples themselves, when a storm arose, and the sea raged, and the ship was ready to be cast away, *Matt. viii.* In which case, we do not find that they fell presently to harangue it about seas and winds, and that dismal face of things that must needs appear all over the devouring element at such a time; all which, and the like, might, no doubt, have been very plentiful topics of eloquence to a man who should have looked upon these things from the shore, or discoursed of wrecks and tempests safe and warm in his parlour. But these poor wretches, who were now entering, as they thought, into the very jaws of death, struggling with the last efforts of nature, upon the sense of a departing life, and consequently could neither speak nor think any thing low or ordinary in such a condition, presently rallied up and discharged the whole concern of their desponding souls in that short prayer, of but three words, though much fuller, and more forcible,

than one of three thousand, v. 25. *Save us, Lord, or we perish.* Death makes short work when it comes, and will teach him, who would prevent it, to make shorter. For surely no man who thinks himself a perishing, can be at leisure to be eloquent, or judge it either sense or devotion, to begin a long prayer, when, in all likelihood, he shall conclude his life before it.

The *Fifth* argument that I shall produce for *Brevity of Speech* in prayer, shall be taken from *the examples* which we find *in scripture*, of such as have been remarkable for *brevity*, and of such as have been noted for *prolixity of speech*, in the discharge of this duty.

And first, for *brevity*. To omit all those notable examples, which the Old Testament affords us of it; and to confine ourselves to the New, in which we are undoubtedly most concerned. Was not this way of praying not only warranted, but sanctified, by that infinitely exact form of prayer, prescribed by the greatest, the holiest, and the wisest man that ever lived, even Christ himself, the Saviour of the world? Was it not an instance both of the truest devotion, and the most comprehensive reason, that ever proceeded from the mouth of man? And yet withal the most succinct model that ever grasped all the needs and occasions of mankind, both spiritual and temporal, into so small a compass? Doubtless, had our Saviour thought fit to amplify, *he, in whom were hid all the treasures of wisdom*, could not want matter, nor he who was himself *the Word*, want variety of the fittest to have expressed his mind by. But he chose rather to contract the whole concern of both worlds into a few lines, and to unite both heaven and earth in his prayer, as he had done before in his person. And indeed one was a kind of copy or representation of the other.

So then, we see here brevity in the *pattern*, let us see it next in the *practice*, and after that, in the *success* of prayer. And first; we have the practice, as well as the pattern of it, in our Saviour himself; and that,

in the most signal passage of his whole life, even his preparation for his approaching death. In which dolorous scene, when his whole soul was nothing but sorrow, (that great moving spring of invention and elocution,) and when nature was put to its last and utmost stretch, and so had no refuge but in prayer, yet even then all his agony and distress of spirit delivers itself but in two very short sentences, in *Matth. xxvi.* *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And again the second time, with the like brevity ; and lastly, the third time also, he used the same short form again ; and yet, in all this, he was, (as we may say without a metaphor,) even praying *for life*, so far as the great business he was then about, to wit, the redemption of the world, would suffer him to pray for it. All which prayers of our Saviour, and others of like brevity, are properly such as we call *ejaculations* ; an elegant similitude from a dart or arrow, shot or thrown out : and such an one, we know, of a yard long, will fly farther, and strike deeper, than one of twenty.

And then, in the last place, for the success of such brief prayers ; I shall give you but three instances of this ; but they shall be of persons praying under the pressure of as great miseries as human nature could well be afflicted with. And the first shall be of the leper, *Matth. viii. 2.* or, as *St. Luke* describes him, *a man full of leprosy, who came to our Saviour, and worshipped him ;* and, as *St. Luke* again has it more particularly, *fell on his face before him,* (which is the lowest and most devout of all postures of worship,) *saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* This was all his prayer ; and the answer to it was, that he was immediately cleansed. The next instance shall be of the poor *blind man*, in *Luke xviii.* following our Saviour with this earnest prayer : *Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me.* His whole prayer was no more : For it is said that he went on, re-

peating it again and again : *Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me.* And the answer he received was, that his eyes were opened, and his sight restored.

The last instance shall be of the *Publican, Luke xviii.* praying under a lively sense of as great a leprosy and blindness of soul, as the other two could have of body, v. 13. *He smote upon his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.* He spoke no more, though he went *solemnly and purposely up to the temple to pray* : The issue of which prayer was, *that he went home justified*, before one of those whom all the Jewish church revered as absolutely the highest and most heroic examples of piety, and most beloved favourites of heaven, in the whole world. And now, if the force and virtue of these short prayers could rise so high as *to cleanse a leper, to give sight to the blind, and to justify a Publican* ; and, if the worth of a prayer may at all be measured by the success of it, I suppose no prayers whatsoever can do more ; and, I never yet heard or read of any *long prayer* that did so much.

Which brings on the other part of our fifth argument, which was to be drawn from the examples of such as have been noted in scripture for *prolixity of prayer*. And of this, there are only two mentioned ; *the Heathens and the Pharisees*. The first, the grand instance of *idolatry* ; the other, of *hypocrisy* : But Christ forbids us the imitation of both. *When ye pray*, says our Saviour, *Be ye not like the heathens, Matth. vi.* But in what ? Why, in this, *that they think they shall be heard for their much speaking*. It is not the multitude that prevails in armies, and much less in words. And then for the *Pharisees*, whom our Saviour represents as the very vilest of men and the greatest of cheats ; we have them amusing the world with pretences of a more refined devotion, while their heart was all that time in their neighbour's coffers. For does not our Saviour expressly tells us, (*Luke xx.*) that the great hooks

or engines, by which they compassed their worst, their wickedest, and most rapacious designs, were *long prayers*? Prayers made only *for a show* or colour; and that, to the basest and most degenerate sort of villany, even the robbing the spittal, and *devouring the houses* of poor, helpless, forlorn widows. Their devotion served all along but as an instrument to their avarice, as a factor or under agent to their extortion; a practice, which duly seen into, and stript of its hypocritical blinds, could not but look very ill-favouredly; and therefore, in come their *long robes*, and their *long prayers* together, and cover all. And the truth is, neither the length of one, nor of the other, is ever found so useful, as when there is something more than ordinary that would not be seen. This was the *gainful godliness* of the *Pharisees*; and, I believe, upon good observation, you will hardly find any like the *Pharisees* for their long prayers, who are not also extremely like them for something else. And thus having given you five arguments for *brevity*, and against *prolixity* of prayer, let us now make this our *other great rule*, whereby to judge of the prayers of *our church*, and the prayers of those who *dissent* and *divide* from it. And first,

For that excellent body of prayers contained in our Liturgy, and both compiled and enjoined by public authority. Have we not here a great instance of brevity and fulness together, cast into several short, significant collects, each containing a distinct, entire, and well managed petition? The whole set of them being like a string of pearls, exceeding rich in conjunction, and therefore of no small price, even single and by themselves. Nothing could have been composed with greater judgment; every prayer being so short, that it is impossible it should weary; and withal so pertinent, that it is impossible it should cloy the devotion; and indeed so admirably fitted to the common concerns of a Christian society, that when the rubrick

enjoins but the use of some of them, our worship is not imperfect; and when we use them all, there is none of them superfluous.

And the reason assigned by some learned men for the preference of many short prayers, before a continued long one, is unanswerable; namely, that by the former there is a more frequent mention made of the name, and some great attribute of God as the encouraging ground of our praying to him, and withal of the merits and mediation of Christ, as the only thing that can promise us success in what we pray for: Every distinct petition *beginning* with the *former*, and *ending* with the *latter*: by which we do manifestly confess that we cannot expect to obtain any one thing at the hands of God, but with a particular renewed respect to the merits of a Mediator, and withal remind the congregation of the same, by making it their part to renew a distinct *amen* to every distinct *petition*.

Add to this, the excellent contrivance of a great part of our Liturgy into alternate responses; by which means the people are put to bear a considerable share in the whole service, which makes it almost impossible for them to be only idle hearers, or, which is worse, mere lookers on; as they are very often, and may be always, (if they can but keep their eyes open,) at the long, tedious prayers of the *Nonconformists*. And this indeed is that which makes our Liturgy truly a book of *Common-Prayer*. For, I think I may truly avouch, (how strange soever it may seem at first,) that there is no such thing as *common* or *joint-prayer* any where amongst the principal dissenters from the church of *England*: For, in the *Romish* communion, the priest says over the appointed prayers only to himself, and the rest of the people, not hearing a word of what he says, repeat also their own particular prayers to themselves; and when they have done, go their way; not all at once, as neither do they come at once, but scatteringly, according as they have finished their devotions. And

then for the *Nonconformists*; their prayers being all *extempore*, it is (as we have shown before) hardly possible for *any*, and utterly impossible for *all* to join in them. For, surely, people cannot join in a prayer before they understand it; nor can it be imagined, that all capacities should presently and immediately understand what they *hear*, when possibly, the *holder-forth* himself understands not what he *says*. From all which we may venture to conclude, that that excellent thing *Common prayer*, which is the joint address of a whole congregation, with united voice as well as heart, sending up their devotions to Almighty God, is no where to be found in these kingdoms, but in that nearest copy of primitive worship, the divine service, as performed according to the orders of our church.

As for those long prayers, so frequently used by some before their sermons, the constitution and canons of our church are not at all responsible for them; having provided us better things, and with great wisdom appointed a form of prayer, to be used by all before their sermons. But as for this way of praying, now generally in use, as it was first took up upon an humour of novelty, and by the same carried on, till it had passed into a custom, and so put the rule of the church first out of use, and then out of countenance also; so, if it be rightly considered, it will, in the very nature of the thing itself, be found a very senseless practice. For, can there be any propriety in beginning a new, tedious prayer in the pulpit, just after the church has, for near an hour together, with great variety of offices, suitable to all the needs of the congregation, been praying for all, that can possibly be fit for Christians to pray for? Nothing certainly can be more irrational. For which cause, amongst many more, that old sober form of *bidding prayer*, which, both against law and reason, has been justled out of the church by this upstart, puritanical encroachment, ought, with great reason, to be restored by authority; and both the

use and users of it, by a strict and solemn reinforcement of the canon upon all, be rescued from that unjust scorn of the factitious and ignorant, which the tyranny of the contrary, usurping custom, will otherwise expose them to. For surely, it can neither be decency nor order for our clergy to *conform* to the fanatics, as many in their prayers before sermon now-a-days do.

And thus having accounted for the prayers of our church, according to the great rule in the *text*, *Let thy words be few*; let us, according to the same, consider the way of praying, so much applauded by such as have renounced the communion and liturgy of our church; it is but reason, that they should bring us something better in the room of what they have so disdainfully cast off. But, on the contrary, are not all their prayers exactly after the *heathenish and pharisaical* copy; always notable for those two things, length and tautology? Two whole hours for one prayer, at a fast, used to be reckoned but a moderate dose; and that, for the most part, fraught with such blasphemous expressions, that, to repeat them would profane the place I am speaking in; and indeed they seldom *carried on the work of such a day*, (as their phrase was,) but they left the church in need of a new consecration. Add to this, the incoherence and confusion, the endless repetitions, and the insufferable nonsense, that never failed to hold out, even with their utmost prolixity; so that in all their *long fasts*, from first to last, from *seven* in the *morning*, to *seven* in the *evening*, (which was their measure,) the pulpit was always the *emptiest* thing in the church; and I never knew such a *fast* kept by them, but their hearers had cause to begin a *thanksgiving*, as soon as they had done. And the truth is, when I consider the matter of their prayers, so full of ramble and inconsequence, and in every respect so very like the language of a dream, and compare it with their carriage of themselves in prayer, with their *eyes* for the most part shut,

and their *arms* stretched out in a yawning posture, a man that should hear any of them pray, might, by a very pardonable error, be induced to think, that he was all the time hearing one *talking in his sleep*; besides the strange virtue which their prayers had to procure sleep in others too. So that he who should be present at all their long cant, would show a greater ability in *watching*, than ever they could pretend to in *praying*, if he could forbear sleeping, having so strong a provocation to it, and so fair an excuse for it. In a word, such were their prayers, both for matter and expression, that could any one exactly write them out, it would be the shrewdest and most effectual way of writing against them, that could possibly be thought of.

I should not have thus troubled either you or myself, by raking into the dirt and dunghill of these men's devotions, upon the account of any thing either done or said by them in the late times of confusion; for as they have the *king's*, so I wish them *God's pardon also*, whom, I am sure, they have offended much more than they have both kings put together. But that which has provoked me thus to rip up to you their nauseous and ridiculous way of addressing to God, even upon the most solemn occasions, is that intolerably rude and unprovoked insolence and scurrility, with which they are every day scoffing at our Liturgy and the users of it, and thereby alienating the minds of people from it, to such a degree that many thousands are drawn by them into a fatal schism; a schism that, unrepented of, will as infallibly ruin their souls, as theft, whoredom, murther, or any other of the most crying, damning sins whatsoever. But leaving this to the justice of the government, to which it belongs to protect us in our spiritual as well as in our temporal concerns, I shall only say this, that nothing can be more for the honour of our Liturgy, than to find it despised only by those who have made themselves remarkable for despising the *Lord's Prayer* as much.

In the mean time, for ourselves of the church of *England*, who, without pretending to any new lights, think it equally a duty and commendation to be *wise*, and to be *devout* only to *sobriety*, and who judge it no dishonour to God himself, to be worshipped according to law and rule. If the directions of *Solomon*, the precept and example of our Saviour, and lastly, the piety and experience of those excellent men and martyrs, who first composed, and afterwards owned our Liturgy with their dearest blood, may be looked upon as sufficient guides to us in our public worship of God; then, upon the joint authority of all these, we may pronounce our Liturgy the greatest treasure of rational devotion in the Christian world. And I know no prayer necessary, that is not in the Liturgy, but one, which is this; *that God would vouchsafe to continue the Liturgy itself in use, honour, and veneration, in this church forever.* And I doubt not, but all wise, sober, and good Christians will, with equal judgment and affection, give it their *amen*.

DISCOURSE VIII.*

THE VIRTUOUS EDUCATION OF YOUTH.

PROV. xxii. 6.

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

WHEN I look back upon the old infamous rebellion and civil war, which like an irresistible torrent broke down the whole frame of our government, both in church and state, together with the principal concerns of private families, and the personal interests of particular men, (as it is not imaginable, that where a deluge overtops the mountains, it should spare the valleys); and when I consider also, how fresh all this

[* The following "Advertisement to the Reader," prefixed to this discourse, gives a diverting picture of the author's chagrin, seeking to relieve itself in affected irony. The cause of his disappointment it might be curious to know, though at this day it will be vain to seek. South's temper, in this notice, rather awkwardly blends with his habitual homage to high birth and station; and that too, in the present instance, in the person of one of the most notorious and detested characters in English history.—ED.]

Whosoever shall judge it worth his time to peruse the following discourse, (if it meets with any such,) he is desired to take notice, that it was penned, and prepared to have been preached at Westminster-Abbey, at a solemn meeting of such as had been bred at Westminster school. But the death of *King Charles II.* happening in the mean time, the design of this solemnity fell to the ground, together with him, and was never resumed since; though what the reason of this might be, I neither know, nor ever thought it worth while to inquire. It being abundantly enough for me, that I can with great truth affirm, that I never offered myself to this service, nor so much as thought of appearing in a post so manifestly above me; but that a very great person, (the

is in the remembrance of many, and how frequent in the discourse of most, and in both carrying the same face of horror (as inseparable from such reflections); I have wondered with myself, and that even to astonishment, how it should be possible, that in the turn of so few years, there should be so numerous a party in these kingdoms, who (as if the remembrance of all those dismal days, between *forty* and *sixty*, were utterly erased out of the minds of men, and of the annals of time) are still ready, nay, eager, and impetuously bent to act over the same tragical scene again. Witness, first of all, the many virulent and base libels spread over the whole nation against the king and his government; and next, the design of seizing his royal person, while the parliament was held in *Oxford* in the year 1682; and likewise the *Rye*-conspiracy, intended for the assassination of the king, and of the duke his brother, in the year 1683; and lastly, though antecedent in time, the two famous **city cavalcades* of clubmen in the years of 1679 and 1680, countenanced under that silly pretence of burn-

Lord *Jefferys*,) whose word was then *law*, as well as his *profession*, was pleased *mero motu* (to speak in the *prerogative style*, as best suiting so commanding a genius) to put this task upon me, as well as, afterwards, to supersede the performance of it: The much kinder act this of the two, I must confess, and that in more respects than one, as saving me the trouble of delivering, and at the same time blushing at so mean a discourse, and the congregation also, the greater, of hearing it. But what farther cause there was, or might be, of so much uncertainty in this whole proceeding, I cannot tell; unless possibly, that what his lordship as chief justice had determined, he thought fit as chancellor to reverse.

Nevertheless, out of an earnest (and I hope very justifiable) desire, partly to pass a due encomium (or such at least as I am able) upon so noble a seat of the Muses, as this renowned school has been always accounted; and partly to own the debt lying upon me to the place of my education, I have at length presumed to publish it. So that, although neither at the time appointed, nor ever since, have I had any opportunity given me to preach this sermon myself; yet now that it is printed, possibly some other may condescend to do it, as before in several such cases the like has been too well known to have been done.

* R. C. said he had tossed up the ball, and his successor, P. W. said he would keep it up. This is to say, *extortion* began the dance, and *perjury* would carry it on.

ing the pope, but carried on with so much insolence and such an open, barefaced contempt of all authority, as if the rabble had in plain terms bid the government do its worst, and touch or meddle with them, if it durst. So hard has the experience of the world found it, for the pardon of a guilt (too big for the common measures of *pardon*) to produce any thing better than the same practices, which had been *pardoned* before.

But since nothing can happen without some cause or other, I have been farther considering with myself what the cause of this terrible evil, which still looks so grim upon the government, should be; and to me it seems to be this: That as the forementioned rebellion and civil war brought upon the nation a general dissolution of order, and debauchment of men's manners, so, the greatest part of the nation by much, now alive, has been *born*, or at least *bred* since. For surely those who are now about or under fifty years of age, make a much greater number in the kingdom, than those who are above it; especially so much above it, as to have passed their *youth* before the time of the late confusions, which have since so perfectly new modelled, or rather extinguished the morality, nay, the very natural temper of the *English* nation.

For this is certain, that thinking men observe with sorrow, that the change is so very great, that there is no relation in society; or common life, but has been the worse for it. For look into families, and you will find parents complaining, that their children pay them not that duty and reverence, which they have heard and read, that children used to show heretofore. Masters also complain, that servants are neither so obedient, nor so trusty as in former times. And lastly, for the conjugal relation, (a thing of the greatest and most direct influence upon the weal or wo of societies,) it is but too frequent a complaint, that neither are men so

good husbands, nor women so good wives, as they were, before that *accursed rebellion* had made that fatal leading breach in the conjugal tie between the *best of kings* and the *happiest of people*. But now, how comes all this to pass? Why, from the exorbitant license of men's education. They were bred in lawless, ungoverned times, and conventicle fanatic academies, in defiance of the universities, and when all things were turned topsy-turvy, and the bonds of government quite loosed, or broken asunder. So that as soon as they were able to observe any thing, the first thing which they actually did observe, were inferiors trampling upon their superiors: servants called *by vote of parliament* out of their master's service to fight against their prince, and so to complete one rebellion with another; and women running in whole shoals to conventicles, to *seek Christ* (forsooth) but to *find somebody* else. By which liberties, having once leaped over the severity of former customs, they found it an easy matter, with debauched morals and deflowered consciences, to launch out into a much greater. So that no wonder now, if in an age of a more improved debauchery, you see men spending their whole time in *taverns* and their lives in *duels*, inflaming themselves with wine, till they come to pay their reckoning with blood; and women spending both time and fortune, and perhaps their honour too, at *balls, plays, and treats*. The reason of all which is, that they are not now bred as they were heretofore: For that which was formerly their *diversion* only, is now their chief, if not sole *business*; and in case you would see or speak with them, you must not look for them at their *own houses*, but at the *play-house*, if you would find them *at home*. They have quite cashiered the commandment, which enjoins them *six days doing what they have to do*, and substituted to themselves a very different one in the room of it; according to which they are for six days *to go to plays* and *to make visits*, setting apart a *seventh*

to go to church to *see* and to be *seen* ; a blessed improvement, doubtless, and such as the *fops* our ancestors (as some use to call them) were never acquainted with. And thus I have in some measure shown you the true grievance, which this *poor* and *distracted kingdom* groans under ; a *grievance*, (without the help of a *vote*,) properly so called ; a grievance springing from a boundless, immense, and absurd liberty. For though the zealous outcry and republican cant still used to join those two tinkling words, *liberty* and *property*, together, (in a very different sense from what belonged to them,) to make a *rattle* for the people ; yet I am sure the intolerable excess of *liberty* has been the chief thing which has so much contributed to the curtailing their *properties* ; the true, if not only cause, which, of late years, has made such numbers so troublesome to the government, as they have been.

Well, but if it be our unhappiness, that the mischief has become almost *general*, let us at least prevent the next degree of it, and keep it from being *perpetual*. And this is not to be done, but by a remedy which shall reach as far and deep as the distemper ; for that began early, and therefore the cure must do so too, even from the *childhood* of the patient, and the *infancy* of the disease. There must be one *instauratio magna* of the methods and principles of *education*, and the youth of the nation, as it were, new cast into another and a better mould.

And for this, we have the counsel and conduct of the wisest of men, *Solomon himself*, who knew no other course to ensure a flourishing practice of virtue, in a man's mature or declining age, but by planting it in his youth ; as he that would have his grounds loaded with fruit in *autumn*, must manure and dress them in the *spring*. *Train up a child in the way that he should go* ; the way, *non quâ itur, sed quâ eundum est*. Man is of an active nature, and must have a *way to walk in*, as necessarily as a place to breathe in. And

several ways will be sure to offer themselves to his choice ; and he will be as sure to choose one of them. His great concern is, that it be a safe one ; since, as the variety of them makes the choice *difficult*, so the illness of some of them must make it *dangerous*. For (as the same *Solomon* tells us) there is *a way which seems right in a man's own eyes*, when yet the tendency of it is fatal ; an easy, pleasant, and a broad way, a way always thronged with passengers, but such, that a man is never the safer for travelling *in company*. But this is not the way here chalked out to us. But rather a *rugged* and *narrow way* ; and upon that account, the *lesser*, and consequently the *younger* any one is, the easier may he get into it, and pass through it. In a word, it is the high road to heaven, the *via ad bonos mores* ; the entrance into which, some say, is never *too late*, and, I am sure, can never be *too soon*. For it is certainly long and laborious ; and therefore, whosoever hopes to reach the end of it, it will concern him to set out betimes ; and his great encouragement so to do, is, that this is the likeliest means to give him constancy in it. He will not *forsake it when he is old* ; and such is the length of the stage, that it will be sure to hold him in his course, and to keep him going on, till he *is grown so*.

It is, in my opinion, very remarkable, that notwithstanding all the rewards which confessedly belong to virtue in both worlds, yet *Solomon* alleges no other argument for the course here recommended to us, but the *end of it* ; nor enjoins us the pursuit of virtue in *our youth*, upon any other reason mentioned in the words, but that we may practise *it in our age*. And no doubt it is an excellent one, and will have many others fall in with it, for the enforcement of the duty here prescribed to us.

For can any thing in nature be more odious and despicable, than a wicked old man ? A man who, after three or four score years spent in the world, after

so many sacraments, sermons, and other means of grace, taken in, *digested* and *defeated*, shall continue as errant an hypocrite and masquerader in religion as ever, still dodging and doubling with God and man, and never speaking his mind, nor so much as opening his mouth in earnest, but when he *eats* or *breathes*.

Again, can any thing be so vile and forlorn, as an old, broken, and decrepid sensualist, *creeping*, as it were, to the devil upon *all four*? Can there be a greater indecency, than an old drunkard? or any thing more noisome and unnatural, than an aged, silver-haired wanton, with *frost* in his bones, and *snow* upon his head, following his lewd, senseless amours? a wretch so scorned and so abandoned by all, *that his very vices forsake him*.

And yet, as youth leaves a man, so age generally finds him: If he passes his youth, juggling, shuffling, and dissembling, it is odds but you will have him at the same leger-demain, and showing tricks in his age also. And if he spends his young days whoring and drinking, it is ten to one but age will *find him* in the same filthy drudgery still, or at least wishing himself so. And lastly, if death (which cannot be far off from age) finds him so too, his game is then certainly at the best, and his condition (which is the sting of all) never possible to be better.

And therefore, whosoever thou art, who hast enslaved thyself to the paltry, bewitching pleasures of youth, and lookest with a wry face and a sour eye, upon the rough severities of virtue, consider with thyself that the *pleasures of youth* will not, cannot be the *pleasures of old age*, though the *guilt* of it will. And consider also, what a dismal, intolerable thing it must needs be, for a man to feel a total declension in his strength, his morals, and his esteem together; and remember, that for all the disciplines of temperance, the hardships of labour, and the abridgments of thy swelling appetites, it will be a sufficient and more than

equivalent recompense, to be healthful, chearful, and honourable, and (which is more than all) *to be virtuous*, when thou art old.

The proposition then before us is this ; that a strict and virtuous education of youth is absolutely necessary to a man's *attainment of that unspeakable felicity of being serviceable to his God, easy to himself, and useful to others, in the whole course of his following life.* In order to the proof of which, I shall lay down these six propositions.

The *First*, That in the present state of nature, there is in every man a certain corrupt principle, more or less disposing him to evil. Which principle, sometimes called the *flesh*, sometimes *concupiscence*, and sometimes *sensuality*, makes one part of that which we call original sin ; a principle which, though it both proceeds from, and disposes to sin, yet till it comes to act, the doctors of the *Romish* church deny to be in itself sinful. And the *Pelagians* deny that there is any such thing at all ; especially our modern, orthodox, and more authentic *Pelagians*. For though our church indeed, in her *ninth article*, positively and expressly asserts both, yet there having been given us, not very long since, a new and more correct draught of *discipline*, to reconcile us to the *schismatics*, it is not impossible but that in time we may have a new draught of *doctrine* also, to reconcile us to the *Socinians*.

The *Second* is this, that the forementioned propensity of the sensual principle, to vice, being left to itself, will certainly proceed to work, and to exert itself in action; and, if not counteracted, will continue so to do, till practice passes into habit, and so by use and frequency comes to acquire a domineering strength in a man's conversation.

The *Third*, That all the disorders of the world, and the confusions that disturb persons, families, and whole corporations, proceed from this natural propensity to vice in particular persons, which, being thus heightened

by habitual practice, runs forth into those several sorts of vice, which corrupt and spoil the manners of men. *Whence come wars and fightings?* says the apostle ; *Come they not hence, even from your lusts that war in your members?* And indeed, it is hard to assign any mischief befalling mankind, but what proceeds from some extravagance, either of passion or desire ; from lust or anger, covetousness or ambition.

The *Fourth* is, that when the corruption of men's manners, by the habitual improvement of this vicious principle, comes from personal to be general, so as to diffuse itself over a whole community, it naturally and directly tends to the subversion of the government where it so prevails ; so that *Machiavel* himself, (a person never likely to die for love of virtue or religion,) affirms over and over in his Political discourses upon *Livy*, *That where the manners of a people are generally corrupted, there the government cannot long subsist.* I say, he affirms it, as a stated, allowed principle ; and I doubt not, but the destruction of governments may be deduced from the general corruption of the subjects' manners, as a direct and natural cause thereof, by a demonstration as certain as any in the mathematics, though not so evident ; for that, I confess, the nature of the thing may not allow.

The *Fifth* is, that this ill principle, which, being thus habitually improved, and from personal corruptions spreading into general and national, is the cause of all the mischiefs, public and private, which infest the world, is to be corrected only by discipline, and the infusion of such principles into the rational and spiritual part of man, as may powerfully sway his will and affections, by convincing his understanding, that the practice of virtue is preferable to that of vice, and that there is a real happiness as well as honesty in the one, and a real misery as well as a turpitude in the other ; there being no mending or working upon the sensual part, but by well principling the intellectual.

The *Sixth* is, that this discipline and infusion of good principles into the mind, which only can and must work this great and happy change upon a man's morals, by counterworking that other sensual and vicious principle which would corrupt them, can never operate so kindly, so efficaciously, as when applied to him in his *minority*, while his mind is ductile and tender, and so ready for any good impression. For when he comes once to be in years, and his mind having been prepossessed with ill principles, and afterwards hardened with ill practices, grows callous and scarce penetrable, his case will be then very different, and the success of such applications very doubtful, if not desperate.

Now the sum of these six propositions in short is this ; that there is in every man naturally (as nature *now stands*) a *sensual* principle disposing him to evil ; that this principle will be sure, more or less, to pass into action, and, if not hindered, to produce vicious habits and customs ; that these vicious habits are the direct causes of all the miseries and calamities that disturb mankind ; that when they come to spread so far, as from personal to grow national, they will weaken, and at length destroy governments ; that this ill principle is contrrollable and conquerable only by *discipline*, and the infusion of good and contrary principles into the mind ; and lastly, that this discipline or infusion of good principles, is never like to have its full force, efficacy, and success, upon the *minds of men*, but *during their youth*.

Which whole chain of propositions proceeding upon so firm and natural, and withal so clear and evident a connexion of each proposition with the other, I suppose there can need no farther demonstration to prove it as absolutely necessary, as the peace of mankind, public and private, can be, that the minds of youth should be formed and seasoned with a strict and virtuous, an early and preventing education.

Let us now see who they are, whose province it is

to be so great a blessing to society, as to be the managers of this important trust. And we shall find that it rests upon three sorts of men, viz. I. *Parents*. II. *School-masters*. And III. The *Clergy*; such especially as have cure of souls.

I. And first for *Parents*. Let them endeavour to deserve that *honour* which God has commanded their children to pay them; and believe it, that must be by greater and better offices, than barely bringing them into this world; which of itself puts them only in danger of passing into a much worse. And as the good old sentence tells us, that it is better a great deal to be *unborn*, than either *unbred*, or *bred amiss*; so it cannot but be matter of very sad reflexion to any parent, to think with himself that he should be instrumental to give his child a *body* only to damn *his soul*. And therefore let parents remember, that as the *paternal* is the most honourable *relation*, so it is also the greatest *trust* in the world, and that God will be a certain and severe exacter of it; and the more so, because they have such mighty opportunities to discharge it, and that with almost infallible success. Forasmuch as a parent receives his child, from the hand of God and nature, a *perfect blank*, a mere *rasa tabula*, as to any guilt actually contracted by him, and consequently may write upon him what he pleases, having the unvaluable advantage of making the first impressions, which are of so strong and so prevailing an influence to determine the practice either to vice or virtue, that *Buxtorf*, in his *Synagoga Judaica* tells us, that the *Jewish* fathers professedly take upon themselves the guilt of all their children's sins till they come to be *thirteen years* old; at which age the youth is called *filius præcepti*, as being then reckoned under the obligation of the law, and so by a solemn discharge left to *sin for himself*.

Now these and the like considerations, one would think, should remind parents, what a dreadful account lies upon them for their children; and that, as their

children, by the laws of God and man, owe them the greatest reverence, so there is a sort of *reverence* also, that they, as much, owe their *children*; a reverence, that should make them not dare to speak a filthy word, or to do a base or an undecent action before them. What says our Saviour to this point? *Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hunged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.* And surely he, who teaches these little ones to *offend God*, *offends them* with a witness; indeed so unmercifully, that it would be much the less cruelty of the two, if the wretch, their father, should stab or stifle those poor innocents in their *nurses'* arms. For then he might damn himself alone, and not his children also; and himself for his own sins only, and not for theirs too.

And therefore, with all imaginable concern of conscience, let parents make it their business to infuse into their children's hearts early and good principles of morality. Let them teach them from their very cradle to think and speak awfully of the great God, reverently of religion, and respectfully of the dispensers of it; it being no part of religion any where, but *within the four seas*, to despise and scoff at the *ministers* of it. But above all, next to their duty to *God himself*, let them be carefully taught their duty to *their king*; and not so much as pretend to the *fear* of the one, without the *honour* of the other; let them be taught a full and absolute (so far as legal) obedience and subjection to him (in all things lawful,) the true and glorious characteristic of the church of *England*; for I know no church else, where you will be sure to find it. And to this end, let parents be continually instilling into their children's minds a mortal and implacable hatred of those twin plagues of Christendom, *fanaticism* and *rebellion*, which cannot be more compendiously and withal more effectually done, than by displaying to them the late unparalleled rebellion, in its flaming and true colours.

For 'this was the method which God himself prescribed to his own people, to perpetuate the remembrance of any great and notable providence towards them; and particularly in the instance of the prime institution of their religion, the passover, *Exod. xii. 26, 27. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service? That you shall say, It is the Lord's passover, &c.* So say I to all true *English* parents. When your children shall ask you, Why do we keep the *thirtieth of January* as a fast? and the *twenty-ninth of May* as a festival? What mean you by this service? Then is the time to rip up, and lay before them the tragical history of the late rebellion and unnatural civil war; a war commenced without the least shadow or pretence of right, as being notoriously against all law; a war begun without any provocation, as being against the justest, the mildest, and most pious prince, that had ever reigned; a war raised upon clamours of grievances, while the subject swam in greater plenty than had ever been known in these islands before; and no grievances to be found in the three kingdoms, besides the persons who cried out of them. Next to this, let them tell their children over and over, of the villanous imprisonments, contumelious trial, and barbarous murder, of that blessed and royal martyr, by a company of *coblers, taylors, draymen, drunkards, whoremongers, and broken tradesmen*, though since, I confess, dignified with the title of the *sober part of the nation*. These, I say, were the illustrious judges of that great monarch. Whereas the whole people of *England*, nobles and commons together, neither in parliament, nor out of parliament, (as that great judge* in the trial of the regicides affirmed,) had power by law to touch one hair of his head, or judicially to call him to account for any of his actions. And then, in the last place, they are to tell their children also of the base and brutish cruel-

* Sir Orlando Bridgman, Lord Chief Baron.

ties practised by those blood-hounds in the *plunders*, *sequestrations*, *decimations*, and *murders* of their poor fellow subjects; likewise of their *horrid oaths*, *covenants*, and *perjuries*, and of their shameless, insatiable, and sacrilegious avarice, in destroying the purest church in the world, and seizing its revenues; and all this under the highest pretences of zeal for religion, and with the most solemn *appeals* to the great God, while they were actually *spitting in his face*.

These things, I say, and a thousand more, they are to be perpetually inculcating into the minds of their children, according to that strict injunction of God himself to the *Israelites*, *Deut. vi.* *These words shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt diligently teach them thy children, &c.* Such discourses should open their eyes in the morning, and close them in the evening. And I dare undertake, that if this one thing had been faithfully practised, even but since the late restoration, (which came upon these poor kingdoms like life from the dead,) the fanatics had never been so considerable as to cause those terrible convulsions in church and state, and those misunderstandings between king and people, which we have seen and trembled at, and must expect to see, as long as the same spirit, which governed in forty-one, continues still so powerful, as it does, amongst us. For, I am sure, no *king* and *that* can ever *reign* quietly together.

But some, perhaps, may here very sagely object; Is not this the way to sour the minds of children, by keeping the remembrance of the late rebellion always fresh upon them? I answer, No; no more than to warn them against poisons, pits, and precipices, is likely to endanger their lives; or to tell them by what ill courses men come to the gallows, is the ready way to bring them thither. No; nothing can be too much hated by *children*, which cannot be too much avoided by *men*. And since vice never loses its hold, where it keeps its reputation, the minds of youth can never be

sufficiently fortified against base actions, but by a deep and early abhorrence, caused by a faithful representation of them. So preposterous a method will it be found to bring a crime out of *fashion*, by making panegyrics upon the criminal.

In short, let parents prevent the very first notions and affections of their children, by engaging them, from the very first, in a hatred of rebellion; and that, if possible, as strong as nature, as irreconcilable as antipathy; and so early, that they themselves may not remember when it began, but that, for aught they know, it was even born with them. Let them, I say, be made almost from their very cradle to hate it, *name* and *thing*; so that their blood may rise, and their heart may swell, at the very mention of it. In a word, let them by a kind of preventing instinct abhor it, even in their *minority*, and they will be sure to find sufficient reason for that abhorrence, when they shall come to *maturity*. And so much for parents.

II. The *Second* sort of persons thus entrusted, are *Schoolmasters*. I know not how it comes to pass, that this honourable employment should find so little respect (as experience shows it does) from too many in the world. For there is no profession which has or can have a greater influence upon the public. Schoolmasters have a *negative* upon the welfare of the kingdom. They are indeed the great *trustees* of the peace of it; as having the growing hopes and fears of the nation in their hands; for, generally, subjects are and will be such as they breed them. So that I look upon an able, well-principled schoolmaster, as one of the most meritorious subjects in any prince's dominions that can be; and every such *school*, under such a master, as a *seminary* of *loyalty*, and a *nursery* of *allegiance*.

Nay, I take schoolmasters to have a more powerful influence upon the spirits of men, than preachers themselves; forasmuch as they have to deal with younger and tenderer minds, and consequently have the advan-

tage of making the deepest impressions upon them ; it being seldom found, that the pulpit *mends* what the school has *marred*, any more than a fault in the *first concoction*, is *ever* corrected by the *second*.

But now, if their influence is so strong, surely it concerns them to use it to the utmost, for the benefit of their country. And for this purpose, let them fix this as an eternal rule in the instruction of youth, that *care* is to be had of their *manners* in the first place, and of their *learning* in the next. And here, as the ground-work of all morality, let youth be taught betimes to *obey*, and to know, that the very relation between *teacher* and *learner*, imports *superiority* and *subjection*. And therefore, let masters be sure to inure young minds to an early reverence of government, by making the first instance of it in themselves, and maintaining the authority of a *master* over them inviolable, still remembering that none is or can be fit to be a *teacher*, who understands not how to be a *master*. For every degree of obstinacy in youth is one step to rebellion. And the very same restive humour, which makes a young man slight his *master* in the school, and despise his *tutor* in the university, (a thing lately much in fashion,) will make him fly in his prince's face in the parliament-house ; of which, not many years since, we have had some scurvy experiments.

There is a principle of pride universally wrapt up in the corrupt nature of man ; and pride is naturally impatient of rule ; and (which is most material to our present case) it is a vice which puts forth betimes, and must be encountered so too, or it will quickly carry too *high a head*, or too *stiff a neck*, to be controlled. It is the certain companion of folly ; and both of them the proper qualifications of youth ; it being the inseparable property of that age to be *proud* and *ignorant*, and to despise instruction, the more it *needs* it. But both of them are nuisances, which education must remove, or the person is lost.

And it were to be wished, I confess, that the constitution of man's nature were such, that this might be done only by the mild addresses of reason, and the gentle arts of persuasion; and that the studies of *humanity* might be carried on only by the ways of *humanity*; but unless youth were all made up of goodness and ingenuity, this is a felicity not to be hoped for. And therefore it is certain, that in some cases, and with some natures, austerity must be used; there being too frequently such a mixture in the composition of youth, that while the *man* is to be *instructed*, there is something of the *brute* also to be *chastised*.

But how to do this discreetly, and to the benefit of him who is so unhappy as to need it, requires, in my poor opinion, a greater skill, judgment, and experience, than the world generally imagines, and than, I am sure, most *masters of schools* can truly pretend to be *masters of*. I mean those *plagosi Orbilii*, those executioners, rather than instructors of youth; persons fitter to lay about them in a coach or cart, or to *discipline boys before a Spartan altar*, or rather *upon it*, than to have any thing to do in a christian school. I would give those pedagogical *Jehu's*, those furious *school-drivers*, the same advice which, the poet says, *Phæbus* gave his son *Phaeton* (just such another *driver* as themselves,)—*parcere stimulis* (the *stimulus* in driving being of the same use formerly that the *lash* is now.) Stripes and blows are the last remedy, and scarce ever fit to be used, but upon such as carry their brains in their backs, and have souls so dull as to serve for little else but to keep their bodies from putrefaction.

Nevertheless, since (as I have shown) there are some tempers, which make these boisterous applications necessary, give me leave, for once, to step out of my profession so far (though still keeping strictly within my subject) as to lay before the educators of youth, these few following considerations; for I shall not, in modesty, call them *instructions*.

1. Let them remember that excellent and never to be forgotten advice, *that boys will be men*; and that the memory of all base usage will sink so deep into them, that it will not be so much *as in their own power* ever to forget it. For though indeed schoolmasters are a sort of kings, yet they cannot always pass such acts of *oblivion*, as shall operate upon their scholars, or perhaps, in all things, *indemnify* themselves.

2. Where they find a youth of spirit, let them endeavour to *govern* that spirit, without *extinguishing* it; to *bend* it, without *breaking* it; for when it comes once to be extinguished and lost, it is not in the power or art of man to recover it; and then (believe it) no knowledge of *nouns* and *pronouns*, *syntaxis* and *prosodia*, can ever make amends for such a loss. The *French*, they say, are extremely happy at this, who will instruct a youth of *spirit* to a *decent boldness*, tempered with a due modesty; which two qualities in conjunction, do, above all others, fit a man both for business and address. But for want of this art, some schools have ruined more good wits than they have improved; and even those which they have sent away with some tolerable improvement, like men escaped from a shipwreck, carry off only the remainder of those natural advantages, which in much greater plenty *they first brought with them*.

3. Let not the chastisement of the body be managed so, as to make a wound which shall rankle and fester in the very soul. That is, let not children, whom nature itself would bear up by an innate, generous principle of emulation, be cowed and depressed with *scoffs* and *contumelies*, (founded perhaps upon the master's own guilt,) to the contempt of their equals and emulators. For this is, instead of *rods*, to chastise them with *scorpions*, and is the most direct way to stupify and besot, and make them utterly regardless of themselves and of all that is praise-worthy; besides that it will be sure to leave in their minds such in-

ward regrets, as are never to be qualified or worn off. It is very undecent for a master to jest or play with his scholars ; but not only undecent, but very dangerous too, in such a way to play upon them.

4. And lastly, let it appear in all acts of penal animadversion, that the *person* is loved while his fault is *punished*; nay, that one is punished only out of love to the other. And (believe it) there is hardly any one so much a *child*, but has sagacity enough to perceive this. Let not *melancholy fumes and spights*, and secret animosities pass for discipline. Let the master be as angry for the boy's fault as reason will allow him ; but let not the boy be in fault, only because the master has a mind to be angry. In a word, let not the master have the *spleen*, and the scholars *be troubled* with it. But above all, let not the sins or *wants* of the parents be punished upon the children ; for that is a prerogative which God has reserved to himself.

These things I thought fit to remark, about the education and educators of youth in general, not that I have any thoughts of invading their province ; but possibly a stander-by may sometimes look as far into the game, as he who plays it, and perhaps with no *less judgment*, because with *much less concern*.

III. The last sort of persons concerned in this great charge, are the *Clergy*. For as parents deliver their children to the schoolmaster, so the schoolmaster delivers them to the minister. And for my own part, I never thought a *pulpit*, a *cushion*, and an *hour-glass*, such necessary means of salvation, but that much of the time and labour which is spent about them, might be much more profitably bestowed, in catechising youth from the *desk* ; *preaching* being a kind of spiritual *diet*, upon which people are always feeding, but never full ; and many poor souls, (God knows,) too like *Pharaoh's lean kine*, much the *leaner for their full feed*.

And how, for God's sake, should it be otherwise ! For to preach to people without principles, is to build where there is no foundation, or rather where there is not so much as *ground* to build upon. But people are not to be harangued, but catechised into principles ; and this is not the proper work of the pulpit, any more than *threshing* can pass for *sowing*. Young minds are to be leisurely formed and fashioned with the first plain, simple, and substantial rudiments of religion. And to expect that this should be done by preaching, or *force of lungs*, is just as if a smith or artist, who works in metal, should think to frame and shape out his work only with his *bellows*.

It is want of catechising, which has been the true cause of those numerous sects, schisms, and wild opinions, which have so disturbed the peace, and bid fair to destroy the religion of the nation. For the consciences of men have been filled with wind and noise, empty notions and pulpit-tattle. So that amongst the most seraphical *illuminati*, and the highest *puritan perfectionists*, you shall find people of fifty years old, not able to give that account of their faith, which you might have had heretofore from a boy of nine or ten. Thus far had the *pulpit* (by accident) disordered the church, and the *desk* must restore it. For you know the main business of the pulpit, in the late times, was to pamper a proud, senseless humour, or rather a kind of spiritual itch, which had then seized the greatest part of the nation, and worked chiefly about their *ears* ; and none were so over-run with it, as the holy *sisterhood*, the *daughters of Sion*, and the *matrons of the New Jerusalem* (as they called themselves.) These brought with them *ignorance* and *itching ears* in abundance ; and *holder-forth* equalled them in one, and gratified them in the other. So that whatsoever the doctrine was, the *application still ran on the surest side* ; for to give those doctrine and use men, those *pulpit-engineers*, their due, they understood how to plant their batteries,

and to make their attacks, perfectly well, and knew that by pleasing the *wife*, they should not fail to preach the *husband* in their *pocket*. And therefore, to prevent the success of such *pious frauds* for the future, let children be *well-principled*, and in order to that, let them be carefully *catechized*.

Well ; but when they are thus catechized, what is to be done next ? Why then, let them be brought to the bishop of the diocese to be *confirmed* by him, since none else, no not all the *presbyters* of a diocese, (nor presbyterians neither,) can perform this apostolical act upon them. For though indeed a bishop may be installed, and visit, and receive his revenues too, by proxy, yet I am sure he can no more *confirm* than ordain by proxy ; these being acts incommunicably *episcopal*.

The church of *Rome* makes *confirmation* a sacrament ; and though the church of *England* does not affirm it to be such, yet it owns it of *divine* and apostolical *institution*. And as to the necessity of it, I look upon it as no less than a completion of *baptism* in such as outlive their childhood, and for that cause called by the ancients *τελείωσις*. It is indeed a man's owning that debt in person, which passed upon him in his baptism by *representation*.

It is also expressly instituted for the collation of those peculiar gifts of *the Spirit*, by the imposition of episcopal hands, which the rubric represents as requisite, to bear him through his Christian course and conflict. For till a person be *confirmed*, he cannot regularly partake of that high and soul-supporting ordinance, the *sacrament* of the Lord's supper. And these are the considerations which render the *confirmation* of *children* necessary, and the neglect of it scandalous and utterly unjustifiable. For is there so much as the least shadow of excuse allegible for parents not bringing their children to the bishop to be confirmed by him ? or for the bishop not to confirm them when duly

brought? The general failure in this duty is no doubt chargeable upon the former; the grand rebellion of *Forty-one*, and the dissolution of all church order thereupon, absolutely unHINGING the minds of most of the nation, as to all concern about religion; nevertheless, if on the other side also, both the high importance of the ordinance itself, and the vast numbers of the persons whom it ought to pass upon, be duly pondered, it will be found next to a necessity, (if at all short of it,) that there should be episcopal visitations more than once in three years, if it were only for the sake of *confirmations*; especially since the judges of the land think it not too much for them to go two circuits yearly. And some are apt to think that no less care ought to be employed in carrying on the discipline of the *gospel*, than in dispensing the benefits of the *law*. For certainly the importance of the former, with those who think men's souls ought to be regarded in the first place, is no ways inferior to that of the latter; at least, many wise and good men of the clergy, as well as others, (who hope they may lawfully *wish*, what they pretend not to *prescribe*,) have thought the proposal not unreasonable. For *confirmation* being the only regular inlet, or rather authentic *ticket* of admission to the Lord's supper, and yet withal the sole act of the bishop; if people, who desire to obtain it, should find that they cannot, would they not be apt to think themselves hardly dealt with, that when Christ has frankly invited them to his table, they should, for want of *confirmation*, find the door shut against them, when they come?

Besides that nothing can be imagined more for the *episcopal dignity*, than that after Christ has thus prepared this heavenly feast for us, he yet leaves it to his bishops, (by lodging this *confirming power* in their hands,) to put us into a regular capacity of appearing at that divine banquet, and of being welcome, when we are there. And therefore, in short, since the power of

confirming, no less than that of *ordaining itself*, is, as we have shown, so peculiar to the episcopal character, as to be also *personal* and incommunicable; all well-wishers to the happy estate of the church, must needs *wish*, that, as the laws of it have put a considerable restraint upon *unlimited ordinations*, so they would equally enforce the frequency of *confirmations*; since a desuetude of these *latter* must no less *starve* the altar, than a superfluity of the *former overstock* the church; both of them, I am sure, likely to prove fatal to it.

But to proceed; as the minister, having sufficiently catechised the youth of his parish, ought to tender them to the bishop to be confirmed by him; and the bishop, for his part, to give his clergy as frequent opportunities of doing so as possibly he can; so after they are thus confirmed, he is to take them into the farther instructions of his ministry, and acquaint them with what they have been confirmed in. And here, the better to acquit himself in this important trust, let him take a measure of what good the pulpit may do, by the mischief which it has *already done*. For in the late times of confusion, it was the *pulpit*, which supplied the *field with swordmen*, and the parliament-house with incendiaries. And let every churchman consider, that it is one of the principal duties of the clergy to make the king's government easy to him, and to prepare him a *willing and obedient people*. For which purpose, the canons of our church enjoin every minister of it to preach *obedience* and *subjection* to the government, *four times a year* at least. And this, I am sure, cannot be more effectually done, than by representing the faction, which troubles and undermines it, as odious, ridiculous, and unexcusable, as with truth, he can; and by exposing those villanous tricks and intrigues, by which they overturned the monarchy under King *Charles I.* and would have done the same again under King *Charles II.* though he had obliged them by a

mercy not to be paralleled, and an *oblivion* never to be forgot.

Let every faithful minister, therefore, of the church of *England*, in a conscientious observance of the laws laid upon him by the said church, make it his business to disabuse the people committed to his charge, by giving them to understand, that most of that noise, which they have so often heard ringing in their ears, *about grievances, arbitrary power, popery and tyranny, oppression of tender consciences, court-pensioners, and the like*, has been generally nothing else, but mere *flam* and *romance*, and that there is no government in *christendom* less chargeable with any of these odious things, than the *English* government under his present majesty; and consequently, that all these clamours are only the artifices of some malcontents and ambitious demagogues, to fright their prince to compound with them, *by taking them off* (as the word is) with great and gainful places; and therefore, that they bark so loud, and open *their mouths* so wide, for no other cause than that some preferment may stop them; the common method, I own, by which *weak governments* use to deal with such as oppose them; till in the issue, by strengthening their enemies, they come to ruin themselves, and to be laughed at for their pains. For that governor, whosoever he is, who prefers his enemy, makes him thereby not at all the less an *enemy*, but much more formidably so, than he was before.

And whereas yet farther, there have been such vehement invectives against *court-pensioners*, let the people, who have been so warmly plied with this stuff, be carefully informed, that those very men, who spread these invectives, do not indeed (as they pretend) hate *pensioners* so much, but that they love *pensions* more, and have no other quarrel to them, but that any should be thought worthy to receive them but themselves.

And then, as for the next clamour about *oppression of tender consciences*; let every conscientious preacher

thoroughly instruct his congregation, that there is no such thing; that from the very restoration of the king, they have been all along allowed (by a law made for that purpose) to worship God after their own way in their own families with five more persons besides; so that all the persecution of these men amounts but to this, that the government will not suffer them to meet in *troops* and *brigades*, and so, under colour of worshipping God, to muster their forces, and show the government how ready they are, when occasion serves, for a battle; so that in truth it is not so much *liberty of conscience*, as *liberty from conscience*, which these men contend for. Likewise let the faithful minister teach his people, that, as the main body of the nation hates popery with the utmost aversion, so that stale pretence of the danger of its being every day ready to return, while this general aversion to it continues, and the laws against it stand in full force (as at present they certainly do) is all of it from top to bottom nothing else but an arrant trick and term of art, and a republican engine to rob the church, and run down the clergy (the surest bulwark against popery); as the very *same plea* had effectually served them for the *same purpose* once before. And lastly, let the youth of the nation be made to know, that all the stir raised by schismatics and dissenters, against the rites of the church of *England*, (which after so much noise are but three in number, and those not only very *innocent*, but very *rational* too,) has been intended only for a blind and a cheat upon those lamentable *tools*, the unthinking rabble, whom these leading impostors are still *managing* and *despising* at the same time. For can any man of sense imagine, that those, whose conscience could serve them to murder their king, (and him the most innocent and pious of kings,) do, or can really scruple the use of the *surplice*, the *cross in baptism*, or *kneeling at the sacrament*? Alas! they have a *cormorant* in their conscience, which can swallow all this, and a

great deal more. But the thing they drive at by this noisy, restless cant, is to get the power and revenues of the church into their *comprehensive clutches*; and, according to a neighbouring pattern, having first possessed themselves of the *church*, to make their next inroads upon the *state*. I say, it is *power* and wealth, and nothing else, which these pretenders design, and push so hard for; and when they have once compassed it, you shall quickly see, how effectually these *men of mortification* will *mortify* all who differ from them; and how little favour and *indulgence* they will show those who had showed them so much before. Such is the cruelty and ingratitude of the party.

All which and the like important heads of discourse, so nearly affecting not only the common interest, but the very vitals of the government, had the parochial clergy frequently and warmly insisted upon to their respective congregations, and to the *younger* part of them especially; such a course could not, but in a short time, have unpoisoned their perverted minds, and rectified their false notions, to such a degree as would in all likelihood have prevented those high animosities, those divisions and discontents, which have given such terrible shocks both to church and state, since the late happy, but never yet duly improved, *restoration*.

And now I must draw towards a close, though I have not despatched the tenth part of what I had to say upon this useful, copious, and indeed inexhaustible subject. I have only two things more to add, and by way of request to you, great men; you who are persons of honour, power, and interest in the government; and, I hope, will show to what great and good purposes you are so.

1. And the first is; that you would employ the utmost of this your *power* and *interest*, both with the king and parliament, to suppress, utterly to suppress and extinguish those private, blind, conventicling academies of grammar and philosophy, set up and taught

secretly by fanatics, all the kingdom over ; a practice which, I will undertake to prove, looks with a more threatening aspect upon the government, than any one fanatical or republican encroachment made upon it besides. For this is the direct and certain way to bring up and perpetuate a race of mortal enemies both to church and state. To derive, propagate, and immortalize the principles and practices of *Forty-one* to posterity, is schism and sedition for ever, faction and rebellion in *sæcula sæculorum* ; which, I am sure, no honest *English* heart will ever say *amen* to. We have, I own, laws against conventicles ; but, believe it, it would be but labour in vain to go about to suppress them, while these nurseries of disobedience are suffered to continue. For those early aversions to the government, which these shall infuse into the minds of children, will be too strong for the clearest after-convictions, when they are men. So that what these under-ground workers have once planted a *brier*, let no governor think, that by all the arts of clemency and condescension, or any other cultivation, he shall be able to change into a *rose*. Our ancestors, to their great honour, rid the nation of *wolves*, and it were well, if (notwithstanding their *sheep's clothing*) the church could be rid of them too ; but that neither will, nor can ever be, so long as they shall be suffered to *breed up their litters* amongst us. Good God ! can all history show us any church or state since the creation, that has been able to settle or support itself by such methods ? I can, I thank God, (looking both him and my conscience in the face,) solemnly affirm, that I abhor every thing like cruelty to men's persons, as much as any man breathing ; but for all that, the government must not be ruined, nor *private* interests *served* to the detriment of the *public*, though upon the most plausible pretences whatsoever. And therefore it will certainly concern the whole nobility, gentry, and all the sober commonalty of the nation, for the sake of God, their prince, their country,

and their own dear posterity, to lay this important matter to heart. For unless these lurking, subterraneous nests of disloyalty and schism* be utterly dismantled, all that the power and wit of man can do to secure the government against that faction, which once destroyed it, will signify just nothing. It will be but as the pumping of a *leaky* vessel, which will be sure to sink for all that, when the devouring element is still soaking and working in an hundred undiscerned *holes*, while it is cast out only at one.

2. My other request to you, great men, is ; that you would, in your respective stations, countenance all legal, allowed, *free grammar-schools*, by causing (as much as in you lies) the youth of the nation to be bred up *there*, and *no where* else ; there being sometimes, and in some respects, as much reason why parents should not *breed*, as why they should not *baptize* their children at home.

But chiefly, let your kind and generous influences upon all occasions, descend upon this royal and illustrious school, the happy place of your education ; a school, which neither disposes men to division in church, nor sedition in state ; though too often found the readiest way (for *churchmen* especially) to thrive by ; but trains up her sons to an invincible loyalty to their prince, and a strict, impartial conformity to the church ; a school so untaintedly loyal, that I can truly and knowingly aver, that ~~is~~ the very worst of times, (in which it was my lot to be a member of it,) we really were *king's scholars*, as well as *called so*. Nay, upon that very day, that black and eternally infamous day of the king's murder, I myself heard, and am now a witness, that the king was publicly prayed for in this

* The reader is desired to cast his eye upon a printed piece, entitled A Letter from a country divine to his friend in London, concerning the education of the dissenters, in their private academies, in several parts of this nation ; humbly offered to the consideration of the grand committee of parliament for religion, now sitting. Printed at London for Robert Clavell in St. Paul's church-yard, 1703.

school, but an hour, or two, at most, before his sacred head was struck off. And this loyal genius always continued and grew up with us; which made that noted *Corypheus** of the Independent faction, (and some time after, viz. 1651, promoted by *Cromwell's* interest to the deanery of *Christ-Church* in *Oxford*,) often say, *that it would never be well with the nation, till this school was suppressed; for that it naturally bred men up to an opposition to the government.* And so far indeed he was in the right; for it did breed up people to an opposition to that government, which had opposed and destroyed all governments besides itself; nay, and even itself too at last; which was the only good thing it ever did. But if in those days, some four or five bred up in this school, (though not under this master,) did unworthily turn aside to other by-ways and principles, we can however truly say this of them, *that though they went out from us, yet they were never of us.* For still the school itself made good its claim to that glorious motto of its royal foundress, *semper eadem*; the temper and genius of it, being neither to be corrupted with promises, nor controlled with threats.

For though, indeed, we had some of those fellows for our governors, (as they called themselves,) yet thanks be to God, they were never our teachers; no, not so much as when they would have perverted us, from the *pulpit*. I myself, while a scholar here, have heard a prime preacher† of those times, thus addressing himself from this very pulpit, to the *leading grandees* of the faction in the pew under it; *You stood up for your liberties, and you did well.* And what he meant by their liberties, and what by their standing up for them, I suppose, needs no explication. But though our ears were still encountered with such doctrines in the church, it was our happiness to be taught other doctrine in the school; and what we

* Dr. John Owen.

† Mr. William Strong.

drank in *there*, proved an effectual antidote against the *poison* prepared for us *here*.*

And therefore, as *Alexander* the Great admonished one of his soldiers (of the same name with himself) still to remember that his name was *Alexander*, and to behave himself accordingly; so, I hope, our school has all along behaved itself suitably to the *royal* name which it bears; and that it will make the same *august name* the standing rule of all its proceedings for ever; still remembering with itself, that it is called the *king's school*, and therefore let nothing arbitrary or tyrannical be practised in it, whatsoever has been practised *against* it. Again, it is the *king's school*, and therefore let nothing but what is loyal come out of it, or be found in it: let it not be so much as tinctured with any thing which is either *republican* or *fanatical*: that so the whole nation may have cause to wish, that the *king* may never want *such a school*, nor the *nation* may ever want *such a king*; a prince, great in every thing which deserves to be accounted *great*; a prince, who has some of all the christian *royal blood* in *Europe*, running in his veins; so that to *be a prince*, is only another word for being of *kin to him*; who, though he is the princely *center* of so many *royal lines*, meeting in his illustrious person, is yet greater for his *qualifications*, than for his *extraction*; and upon both accounts much likelier to be *envied*, than *equalled* by any, or all the princes about him. In a word, and to conclude all; a prince so deservedly dear to such as truly love their country and the prosperity of it, that, could it be warrantable to pray for the perpetuity of his *life amongst us*, and *reign over us*, we could not do it in words more proper and significant for that purpose, than that God would vouchsafe to preserve the *one*, and continue the *other*, till we should desire to see a change of *either*.

* Viz. *Westminster-Abbey*, where this sermon was appointed to have been preached.

DISCOURSE IX.

THE MYSTERY OF THE BLESSED TRINITY.

COL. ii. 2.

—*To the acknowledgment of the mystery of God,
and of the Father, and of Christ.*

IN the handling of the doctrine of the Trinity, I do not remember any place so often urged, and insisted upon by divines, as that in 1 John v. 7. *There are three who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one*: a text fully containing in it the doctrine of three distinct divine persons, in one and the same blessed and eternal Godhead; a doctrine unanimously received by the catholic christian church, and warranted by the testimony of the most ancient, genuine, and unexceptionable copies of the New Testament, as well as of the most noted fathers concerning it; and that not only as of a single article, but rather as the sum total of our christian faith, a full, but short *compendium* of our religion. And yet under these high advantages of credibility, we see what opposition it met with, both from ancients and moderns; of the first sort of which, we have *Arius*, with his infamous crew, leading the van, by questioning the text itself, as if not originally extant in some two or three ancient copies of this epistle; and, of the latter sort, are those innumerable sects sprung up since; some of them openly denying, and

some of them (whose learning one would have thought might have been better employed) slyly undermining this grand fundamental ; and while they seemingly acknowledge the truth, as it lies in the bare words of the *text*, treacherously giving it up in the *explication*.

As for the *Socinians*, who hold with the *Arians*, so far as they oppose us, they have a double refuge. And first, with them *pretending* the doubtfulness of the text, they would farther evade it by a new interpretation of *its sense*, affirming, that this expression [*these three are one*] does not of necessity import an *unity of nature*, but *only of consent* : The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, being therefore said to *be one*, because they jointly and indivisibly carry on one and the same design.

Thus say they ; but if no more than *matter of consent* were here intended, where then (in God's name) would be the *mystery*, which the universal christian church have all along acknowledged to be contained in these words ? For that the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Spirit*, should thus jointly carry on the grand business of saving mankind, is a doctrine expressing in it nothing mysterious, or surpassing man's understanding at all.

But farther, if *unity of consent* only were intended, why in all reason was it expressed by *ἐν εἰσι*, that is, they are one *thing, being, or nature*, and not rather by *εἰς τὸ ἐν εἶσι*, they agree in one ? as in the very next verse, such an *unity of concurrence* in the *spirit*, the *water*, and the *blood*, is expressed by the same words, manifestly importing no *unity of nature or being*, but only of *agreement* in some certain respect or other ; and doubtless, in so very near a conjunction of words, had the sense been perfectly the same, there can be no imaginable reason given, why the apostle should in the very same case thus have varied the expression.

But, for yet a farther assertion of the great truth now insisted upon, this text out of the epistle to the

Colossians will as effectually evince the same, as the place before mentioned ; though perhaps not quite so plainly, nor wholly in the same way ; that is to say, it will do it by *solid inference and just consequence from the words*, though not expressly in the words themselves. And accordingly we may consider those words, *Εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, two different ways, viz.

1. As the term *τοῦ Θεοῦ* may be taken *personally*, as in scripture sometimes it is, and then it will here signify the *Holy Ghost*, the *third person* of the blessed Trinity, though not indeed mentioned in this place in the *same order* in which the three persons commonly use to be ; but the order, I conceive, may sometimes be less observed, without any detriment to the *article itself*. And so this text will point out to us the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, as well as that fore-alleged *place* out of *St. John*. But,

2. If the word *τοῦ Θεοῦ* be here taken *essentially*, and for the *divine nature* only, then the particle *καὶ* will import here properly a distribution of *τοῦ Θεοῦ* (the *divine nature*) as a term common to those two, *τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, as to two particular persons, distinguished by their respective properties. And so taken, it must be confessed, that the term *τοῦ Θεοῦ* here will not signify the *person of the Holy Ghost*. But granting all this ; are there not, however, *two other persons* in the divine nature manifestly signified thereby ? Forasmuch as the Godhead, here imported by *τοῦ Θεοῦ*, is expressly applied both to the *Father* and the *Son*, in those words *τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*. And that, I am sure, (should it reach no farther,) is a full and irrefragable confutation of the *Socinians*, the grand opposers of the doctrine now insisted upon. For these men deny not a *plurality* of persons in the Godhead from any pretence of some peculiar repugnancy of the *number of three* to the same, more than of any *other number* ; but

that there can be any more persons in the Godhead, *than only one*; and consequently, that a *binary* number of persons in it would, in a *Socinian's* account, pass for no less an absurdity, than even a *trinity* itself; the grand article controverted between us and them.

The words therefore being thus examined and explained, I shall draw forth the sense of them into this one proposition: *That a plurality of persons, or personal subsistences in the divine nature, is a great mystery, and so to be acknowledged by all who really are, and profess themselves Christians.* The discussion of which shall lie in these two things; in showing,

I. What *conditions* are required to denominate a thing properly a *mystery*. And II. That all *these conditions* meet in the article of the blessed *Trinity*.

I. And first for the first of these. The *conditions* required to constitute and denominate a thing properly a *mystery*, are these three. 1. That the thing so denominated, be in itself really true, and not contrary to reason. 2. That it be a thing above the reach of mere reason to find it out, before it be revealed. 3. That being revealed, it be yet very difficult for, if not above finite reason fully to comprehend it. And here,

1. A *mystery* must be a thing *really true*, and *by no means contrary to reason*. Where let me lay down this maxim, as the ground-work of all that is to follow; to wit, that *as nothing can be an article of faith, that is not true*, so neither can any thing be *true*, that is *irrational*. Some indeed lay this as their foundation, that *men in matters of religion are to deny and renounce their reason*; but if so, then let any one declare, why I am bound to embrace the *christian religion*, rather than that of *Mahomet*; and, I suppose, you will tell me, because the *christian religion was revealed and attested by God*. To which I answer, first, that this very thing, *that it was thus attested by God*, is the greatest reason for our believing it true in the

world; as convincing as any demonstration in the *mathematics*; it being founded upon the essential, un-failing veracity of God. But, then farther, I ask, how I shall know, that this is *revealed by God*? Now here, if you will prove this to me, (it being *matter of fact*;) you must have recourse to all those grounds, upon which reason uses to *believe matters of fact, when past*; and accordingly show me, how that all these are to be found for the christian religion, and not of any other pretending to contradict it. And this, I am sure, is solid arguing in the case before us; and being so, what can it amount to less, than a just demonstration of the thing here intended to be proved? I say, a demonstration proceeding upon principles of *moral certainty*; a certainty such, as being denied, must infallibly draw after it as great an absurdity in reference to *practice*, as the denial of *any first principle can do in point of speculation*. As for instance, I look upon the unanimous testimony of a competent number of sincere, disinterested eye or ear-witnesses; and, which is more, (in the present case inspired too,) all affirming the same thing, to be a ground *morally certain, why we should believe that thing*; forasmuch as the *denial of its certainty* would, amongst many other absurdities, run us upon this great one, that we can have no *certain knowledge* of any thing, but what we ourselves have personally observed with our own senses; which assertion, if stuck to, would be as absurd and inconvenient in the transactions of *common life*, as to deny, that two and two make four in *arithmetic*. And in good earnest it will be very hard (if possible) to assign any other sufficient reason, why our Saviour, *Mark xvi. 14.* upbraided some with their *unbelief* as unexcusable, only for *not believing those who had seen him after he was risen*.

In short, the ultimate object of faith is divine revelation; that is, I believe such a thing *true*, because revealed by God; but then my reason must prove to me, that it is revealed; so that, this way, reason is that, into which all religion is at last resolved.

And let me add, that *no one truth can possibly contradict another truth*; for then *two contradictions might be true*. And therefore, if it be *true in the christian religion, that one nature may subsist in three persons*, the same cannot be false in *reason*. Thus much, I confess, that, take the thing abstract from divine revelation, there is nothing in reason able to prove that there is such a thing; but then, this also is as true, that there is nothing in reason able to *disprove it*, and to evince it to be *impossible*.

But you will say, that for the same thing to be three, and one, is a contradiction, and therefore reason cannot but conclude it impossible. I answer, that for a thing to be one, in that very respect in which it is three, is a contradiction; but to assert, that that which is *one* in this respect, may be *three* in another, is no contradiction.

But you will reply, that the single nature of any person is uncommunicable to another, as the essence of *Peter* is circumscribed within the person of *Peter*, and so cannot be communicated to *Paul*.

In answer to this, let it be here observed, that this is the constant fallacy that runs through all the arguments of the *Socinians* in this dispute; and all that they urge against a triple subsistence is still from instances taken from *created natures*, and applied to the divine; and because they see this impossible, or, at least, never exemplified in them, they conclude hence, that it must be so also in this.

But this is a gross and apparent error in argumentation; it being a mere transition *à genere ad genus*, which is to conclude the same thing of different kinds; and because this holds true in things of this nature, to conclude the same true also in things that are of a clean different nature, is a manifest paralogism.

To all these arguments therefore, I oppose this one, I think, not irrational consideration: That it is a thing very agreeable even to the notions of bare reason to

imagine, *that the divine nature has a way of subsisting very different from the subsistence of any created being.* For inasmuch as *nature* and *subsistence* go to the making up of a *person*, why may not the way of their subsistence be quite as different as their natures are confessed to be? And therefore, though it be necessary in *things created* (as no one instance appears to the contrary) for *one single essence* to subsist in *one single person and no more*, does this at all prove, that the same must be also *necessary in God*, whose nature is wholly different from theirs, and consequently may differ as much in the manner of *subsistence*, and so may have one and the *same nature* diffused into three distinct persons? This one consideration, I say, well weighed, will retund the *edge* and *dint* of all the *Socinian* assaults against this great article; whom I have still observed to assert boldly, when they conclude weakly; and in all their arguments to prove nothing more than this, that the greatest pretenders to, are not always the greatest masters of *reason*.

But before I dismiss this particular, I observe this, that for a man to prove a thing clearly, is to bring it by apparent consequence, from some principle in itself evident, and granted by all: otherwise it would not be a demonstration, but an infinite progress.

This being supposed; in case any one shall so disprove the Trinity, as to show, that it really contradicts some such principle of reason evident in itself, and universally granted by the unprejudiced apprehensions of mankind, I should not be afraid to expunge this article out of my creed, and to discharge any man living from a necessity of believing it. For God cannot enjoin any thing absurd or impossible: But for any man to assent to two contradictory propositions, as true, while he perceives them contradictory, is the first-born of impossibilities.

Reason therefore is undeservedly traduced, when it is set up and shot at, as the irreconcilable enemy of

religion. It is indeed the very crown and privilege of our nature ; a ray of divinity sent into a mortal body ; the *star that guides all wise men to Christ* ; the lantern that leads the eye of faith, and is no more an enemy to it, than an obedient handmaid to a discreet mistress. Those indeed, whose tenets will not bear the test of it, and whose ware goes off best in the dark rooms of ignorance and credulity, and whose *faith* has as much cause to *dread a discovery as their works* ; these, I say, may decry reason ; and that indeed not without reason.

For ask such, upon what grounds they believe the truth of christian religion, whereas others so much oppose it ; and here, instead of rational inducements and solid arguments, we shall have long harangues of the *kingdom of Jesus Christ*, of *rolling upon the promises*, of the *spirit of assurance*, and the *preciousness of gospel dispensations*, with many other such-like words, as show that they have followed their own advice to others, and wholly renounced their reason themselves.

But I cannot think or persuade myself, that God gave us eyes, only that we may pluck them out, and brought us into the world with reason, that, being born men, we might afterwards grow up and improve into brutes, and become elaborately irrational. No, surely, reason is both the gift and image of God, and every degree of its improvement is a farther degree of likeness to him. And though I cannot judge it a fit saying, for a dying Christian to make that wish of *Averroes*, *Sit anima mea cum philosophis* ; yet while he lives, I think no Christian ought to be ashamed to wish, *Sit anima mea cum philosophiâ*. And for all these boastings of new *lights*, *inbeamings*, and *inspirations*, that man that follows his reason, both in the choice and defence of his religion, will find himself better led and directed by this one guide, than by an hundred *directories*. And thus much for the *first condition*.

2. The second condition required to denominate a thing properly a mystery, is, *that it be above the reach of reason to find it out, and that it be first knowable only by revelation.* This, I suppose, I shall not be called upon to prove, it being a thing clear in itself.

But we have been told by some, that there are some hints and traces of the article of the Trinity to be found in some heathen writers, as *Trismegistus* and *Plato*. To which I answer, first, that if there do occur such hints of a Trinity in such writers, yet it follows not hence, that they owed them to the invention of their own reason, but received them from others by tradition, who themselves first had them from revelation. But, secondly, to the case in hand; I answer more fully, that it cannot be denied, but that some Christians have endeavoured to defend the truth imprudently and unwarrantably, by bad arts, and falsifying of ancient writers; and that such places as speak of the Trinity are spurious, or at least suspicious; as the whole book that now goes under the name of *Trismegistus*, called his *Pæmander*, may justly be supposed to be.

But that we may a little aid our apprehensions in conceiving of this great mystery, let us endeavour to see, whether upon the notions of reason, we can frame to ourselves any thing that may carry in it some resemblance at least of one single, undivided nature's casting itself into three subsistences, without receding from its own unity. And for this purpose, we may represent to ourselves an infinite, rational Mind, which, considered under the first, original perfection of *being*, may be called the *Father*; inasmuch as the perfection of existence is the first, and productive of all others. Secondly, in the same infinite Mind may be considered the perfection of understanding, as being the first great perfection that issues from the perfection of existence, and so may be called the *Son*, who also is called *ὁ Λόγος*, the *Word*, as being the first emanation

of that infinite Mind. And then, thirdly, when that infinite Mind, by its *understanding*, reflects upon its *own essential perfections*, there cannot but ensue an *act of volition* and *complacency in those perfections*, which may be called the *Holy Ghost*, who therefore is said to proceed both from the *Father* and the *Son*, because there must be not only existence, but also understanding, before there can be love and volition. Here then, we see, that one and the same Mind is both *being*, *understanding*, and *willing*; and yet we can neither say that being is understanding, nor that understanding is willing; nor, on the contrary, that understanding is merely being, nor that willing is understanding. Forasmuch as the proper, natural conception of one is not the conception of the other, nor yet commensurate to it. And this I propose, neither as a *full explication*, nor, much less, as a *just representation* of this great mystery; but only (as I intimated before) as some remote and faint adumbration thereof. For still this is, and must be acknowledged unconceivably above the reach and ken of any human intellect; and as a depth, in which the tallest reason may swim, and, if it ventures too far, may chance to be swallowed up too.

Nay, I think, that it was a thing not only locked up from the researches of reason, amongst those that were led only by reason, I mean the *Gentiles*; but that it was also concealed from, or at best but obscurely known by the *Jewish church*. And *Peter Galatine* assigns a reason, why God was not pleased to give the *Jews* any express revelation of this mystery; namely, that people's great stupidity and grossness of apprehension, together with their exceeding proneness to idolatry; by reason of the former of which, they would have been apt to entertain very uncouth conceptions of the Godhead and the three persons, as if they had been three distinct gods; and thereupon to have been easily induced to an idolatrous opinion of them; and

therefore, that the unfolding of this mystery was reserved till the days of the *Messias*, by which time the world should, by a long increase of knowledge, grow more and more refined and prepared for the reception of this so sublime and mysterious an article.

This was his reason for God's concealing it from the *Jews*; for that God did so, the Old Testament, which is the great ark and repository of the *Jewish* religion, seems sufficiently to declare; there being no text in it, that expressly holds forth a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead. Several texts are indeed urged for that purpose, though (whatever they may allude to) they seem not yet to be of that force, as to infer what some undertake to prove by them. Such as are,

(1.) Those words in the first of *Genesis*, *Bara Elohim*; where *Elohim*, signifying God, and being of the plural number, is joined with *bara*, *creavit* a verb of the singular. Whence some collect, that the former word imports a plurality of persons, and the latter an unity of essence. But others deny that any such peculiar meaning ought or can be gathered from that, which is indeed no more than an idiom of the *Hebrew* language. For that *Elohim*, applied to others besides God, is often joined with a singular number.

(2.) Another place alleged for the same purpose, is that in *Gen. i. 26*. *Let us make man, in our own image*, where they say that there is a consultation amongst many persons in the Godhead. But to this also it is answered, that the term, *Let us make*, does not of necessity imply any *plurality*, but import only the *majesty* of the speaker; princes being accustomed to speak of themselves in the *plural number*; as *we will, and require you, and it is our royal will and pleasure*. This is the common dialect of kings, and yet it infers in the speaker no plurality; for then surely a king would speak very unlike a monarch.

(3.) There is a third place also, in *Isa. vi. 3*. where the threefold repetition of *holy, holy, holy*, applied to

God, is urged by some to relate distinctly to the three hypostases of the Godhead. But this is thought by others to have so little of an argument in it, as scarce to merit any answer ; it being so usual with all nations and languages to express any thing *vehement* or *extraordinary*, by thrice repeating the word used by them ; suitable to which are those expressions that occur in classic authors, as *ter geminis tollit honoribus*, and *O ter felices*, and *illi robur & æs triplex circa pectus erat*, with infinite the like instances ; in all which, the manner of speaking serves only to express the greatness of the thing spoke of. So that these, and such like places of scripture, carry not in them any such evident proof of the Trinity, as to persuade us, that the *Jewish* church could from hence arrive to any clear knowledge of this article. The forementioned *Galatine* indeed affirms the *Talmudists* to speak several things concerning it very plainly ; and from hence concludes, that in regard the *Talmud* is a collection of the several writings of the old *Jewish* doctors upon the Old Testament, it must import, that since they wrote of the *Trinity*, and the *Messias*, there was then a knowledge of these things in the *Jewish* church. But I fear the authority of these *Talmudical* writings will weigh so little in this case, that if the letter of the scripture will not otherwise speak a Trinity, but as it is helped out by the *Talmud*, few sober persons will seek for it there. The only solid proof, that makes towards the eviction of a Trinity from thence, I conceive to lie in those texts that prove the divine nature of the *Messias*, whose coming was then expected by all the *Jews*. Otherwise, surely, the knowledge of this article could but very obscurely be gathered from the bare writings of *Moses* and the prophets, and consequently was by no means received with that explicitness in the ancient *Jewish* church, that it is now in the christian.

As for the opinion of the modern *Jews* touching this

matter, we shall find, that these acknowledge no such thing as a *Trinity*, but utterly explode it. And as for the *Mahometan* religion, (which being a gallimaufry made up of many, partakes much of the *Jewish*,) that also wholly denies it; and the professors of it, in all their public performances of religious worship, with much zeal and earnestness frequently reiterate this article; *There is but one God, there is but one God*; not so much out of zeal to assert the *unity of the God-head*, as to exclude the *Trinity of Persons* maintained by Christians.

I conclude therefore, that it is very probable, that the discovery of this mystery was a privilege reserved to bless the times of Christianity withal, and that the *Jews* had either none, or but a very confused knowledge of it. It was the great *arcanum* for the receiving of which the world was to be many ages in preparing. As long as the *veil of the temple remained*, it was a *secret* not to be looked into; an *holy of holies*, into which even the high priest himself did not enter. And thus much for the second condition required to make or constitute a mystery.

3. The last condition is this: *That after it is revealed, it be yet difficult to be understood*. And he who thinks the contrary, let him make trial. For although there is nothing in reason to *contradict*, yet neither is there any thing to *comprehend* it. We may as well shut a mountain within a mole-hill, or take up the ocean in a cockle-shell, as reach the stupendous, sacred intricacies of the divine subsistence, by the feeble notions of a created apprehension.

Reason indeed proves the *revelation* of it by God; but here it stops, and pretends not to understand and fathom the nature of the thing *revealed*.

If any one should plead a parity of the case, as to this article of the *Trinity*, and that about *transubstantiation*, and allege, that since we deny not a *Trinity*, though we understand it not, but account it a mystery,

why may we not take *transubstantiation* also in the number of mysteries, and believe it, though it be impossible to be understood?

To this I answer, (1.) in general, that no man discoursing rationally upon this subject, refuses to believe *transubstantiation* merely that it is *impossible to be understood*. (2.) I affirm, that the case between *transubstantiation* and the *Trinity* is very different; the former being contradicted by the judgment of that faculty of which it is properly the object; the latter being not at all *contradicted*, but only *not comprehended* by the faculty, to which the cognizance of it does belong. To make which clear, we must observe, that both the bread and the body of Christ, about which transubstantiation is said to be effected, being endued with *quantity, colour*, and the like, are the *proper objects of sense*, and so fall under the cognizance of the *sight* and *touch*; which senses being entire, they both can and do certainly judge of their *proper objects*, and upon such judgment find it to be a contradiction for a small body retaining its own proper dimensions, at the same time to have the dimensions of a body forty times greater. For one body to be circumscribed, and so compassed in one place, and at the same time to fill a thousand more, I say it is a contradiction; for it makes the same thing in the very same respect to be *circumscribed*, and *not to be circumscribed*; circumscribed, because encompassed in such a place; and yet not circumscribed, because extending itself beyond that place to many others.

II. But now, on the other side, the *divine nature* and the *Trinity* are not the *objects of sense*, and consequently sense passes no judgment upon them. But they are the objects of (and so only tryable by) the *understanding*, taking in these things from the *reports not of sense, but revelation*. Which supreme faculty being thus informed by *revelation* tendering these reports to its apprehension, and withal finding that none

of those rules by which it judges of the truth or falsity of what it apprehends, do at all contradict what revelation thus reports of the *divine nature and the Trinity*; it rationally judges, that they may, and ought to be assented to.

For the stress of the point lies here, and let all the reason of mankind prove, if it can, *that wheresoever the denomination of three is ascribed to any nature, it must of necessity multiply the nature itself, and not its relations only.* Which being so; those that make the article of the *Trinity* parallel to that of *transubstantiation*, in point of its contrariety to reason, if they will speak to the purpose, must undertake to prove, that for *one* infinite *being* to be in any respect whatsoever, three, without a *triplication* of that nature, and so a loss of its unity, is as repugnant to some known principle of reason discoursing upon the reports of revelation, as for that thing, which all my senses tell me to be a little piece of bread, to be yet both for figure and dimension really a man's body, is contradictory to all those principles, by which sense judges of those things that properly fall under the judgment of sense.

Let this, I say, be clearly and conclusively made out, and the business is done. But till then, they must give us leave to judge, that there is as much difference between the article of the *Trinity as stated by us, and that of transubstantiation as stated by them*, as there is between *difficulty* and *contradiction*.

And now, if there be any, whose reason is so unruly and over-curious, as to be still unsatisfied, such must remember, that when we have made the utmost explications of this article, we pretend not thereby to have altered the nature of the subject we have been treating of, which, after all, is *still a mystery*; and they must know, moreover, that when the sacred mysteries of religion are discoursed of, the business of a Christian is sobriety and submission, and his duty to be *satisfied*, even though he were not con-

vinced. The Trinity is a fundamental article of the christian religion ; and as he that denies it, may lose *his soul*, so he that too much strives to understand it, may lose *his wits*. Knowledge is nice, intricate, and tedious ; but faith is easy ; and what is more, it is safe. And why should I then unhinge my brains, and pursue distraction in the disquisition of that which a little study would sufficiently convince me to be unintelligible ? Or why should I by chewing a pill make it useless, which swallowed whole might be curing and restorative ? A Christian, in these matters, has nothing to do but to believe ; and since I cannot scientifically comprehend this mystery, I shall worship it with the religion of submission and wonder, and casting down my reason before it, receive it with the devotions of silence, and the humble distances of adoration.

But here, having drawn the business so far, I cannot but take notice of some of those blasphemous expressions which the *Socinians* use, concerning the sacred mystery of the *Trinity* ; their terms (as I have collected some out of many) are such as these : “ *Deus Tripersonatus. Idolum Portentosum. Figmentum Satanæ. Antichristi Cerberus. Triceps Geryon. Idolum trifons. Monstrum triforme. Deus incognitus, adeoque procul rejiciendus, & Satanæ conditori suo restituendus.* Now, that the authors of these ugly appellations show themselves not only bold and impious, but also (what by no means they would be thought) very unreasonable, will, I think, appear from these two considerations :

First, That the doctrine so broadly decried by them, is at least very difficult, and hardly comprehensible ; and therefore, though it could not be *proved true*, yet, upon the same score, it can as hardly be *proved false*. But now these expressions ought to proceed not only upon the *supposition* of its bare falsity, but also upon the undeniable *clearness of its falsity* ; or they must needs be impudent and intolerable.

He who says, that it is *clear*, that there can be no such thing as the *quadrature of the circle*, makes an impudent assertion; for, though possibly there can be really no such thing, yet since there have been such considerable reasons for it as to engage the greatest wits in the search after it, no man can rationally say, that it is *clear* and *manifest*, that there is no such thing. But besides, in this case, they deal very irrationally in rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, because it is *not intelligible*; when not only in divinity, but also in philosophy, (where yet, not *faith*, but *strict ratiocination* should take place,) they acknowledge many things, which the best reason will scarce be able to frame an explicit notion and apprehension of. Such as are the composition and division of *continued quantities*, and the like, which these men, I believe, will not deny, though it would set them hard to give a clear account of them.

Secondly, The same charge of absurdity lies against these men upon this account, that they prefer their particular reason before the united reason of a *much greater number than themselves*; every one of which were of as great industry to search, and of as great abilities to understand the mysteries of divinity, as these men can be presumed to be.

Now, as this is much beside *good manners*, so indeed it is no less short of *good reason*; which will prove thus much at least; that when a few learned persons deny a proposition, and others *forty times more numerous, and altogether as learned*, do unanimously affirm it, it is very probable that the truth stands rather with the majority.

For if I should demand of these men, how they come to judge the doctrine of the Trinity to be false? they must tell me, that they have studied the point, considered the text, examined it by the principles of reason, and that by the use of these means they come at length to make this conclusion.

But to this I answer, that others, who have studied the point as much, considered the text as exactly, and examined it by as strong principles of reason, and so standing upon equal ground with them in point of *abilities*, have much the advantage of them in point of *number*.

But must I therefore conclude, that what is affirmed by such a majority of persons so qualified, is certainly true? I answer, No; but this I assert, that it is great reason, though their assertion appear never so *strange* to me, that I should yet *suspend my judgment*, and not peremptorily conclude it *false*; since there is hardly any *way* of ratiocination, used by one to prove it a *falsity*, but by the very *same way* others persuade themselves, that they as strongly prove it a *truth*.

And thus I think, that these men's exceptions against this great article are, to such as understand reason, sufficiently proved irrational. But since these men reject the doctrine of the *Trinity* upon pretence both of its *impiety* and *absurdity*, it is but requisite, that they should acquit themselves, in all their doctrine, from any thing either *impious* or *absurd*. But yet, that they cannot do so, these following positions, maintained by them, will, I believe, demonstrate.

1. To assert, as *Volkelius*, (*de Verâ Religione*,) not obscurely does, the *matter* of the universe to be a *passive principle* eternally co-existing with God the *active*, is impious, and not consistent with God's infinite power; for if *matter* has its being from itself, it will follow, that it can preserve itself in being against all opposition, which makes God not omnipotent.

2. To allow God's power to be infinite, and yet his substance to be *finite*, is monstrously absurd; but to assert, as *Crellius*, in his book *de Attributis Dei*, does, that his substance is *circumscribed* within the compass of the highest heaven, is clearly to make it finite.

3. To allow all God's *prophecies* and *predictions* recorded in scripture, of *future contingent passages*, de-

pending upon the free choice of man's will, to have been certain and infallible, and yet his *prescience* of the same contingent things not to be certain, but only conjectural, as *Socinus*, in his *prelections*, does affirm, is out of measure absurd and ridiculous.

4. To affirm Christ to be a *mere creature*, and yet to contend, that he is to be *invoked and worshipped*, is contrary to all the discourses of right reason, and withal as offensive and scandalous to *Jews* and *Turks*, and *such-like*, as the bare affirmation of his divine nature can be pretended to be. But *Socinus*, though he denies this, yet is so earnest for the divine *adoration* and *invocation* of Christ, that he affirms, that of the two, it is better to be a *Trinitarian*, than not to ascribe this to him.

5. To assert, that the people of God, under the *Jewish* economy, lay under the obligation of no *precept to pray to God*, as *Volkelius*, in his *de Verâ Religione*, positively affirms, is an assertion highly *impious*, and to all pious minds abominable.

6. To assert, that it is lawful for a man *to tell a lie*, to secure himself from some great inconvenience, as the same *Volkelius* does, not only consists not with piety and sincerity, but tends to drive even *common honesty* out of the world.

7. To assert, that it is *unlawful for Christians in any case to wage war*, as *Socinus* himself does, in his 2d epistle to *Christophorus Morstinus*, a *Polonian* commander, in which he allows him to bring his army into the field *in terrorem hostium*, provided that he neither strikes a stroke, nor draws blood, nor cuts off a limb : this, I say, is grossly absurd, unnatural, and contrary to the eternal principle of self-preservation ; as engaging men, even for conscience' sake, to surrender their lives and fortunes to any that shall think fit to require them. Neither can *Socinus*, in reason, so urge those words of our Saviour, *of not resisting evil*, in this case, if he will be but true to his own principle.

For in his 3d book, *de Christo Servatore*, disputing against Christ's satisfaction, he pleads, *that in regard it is contrary to reason; though the scripture should never so often affirm it, yet it ought not to be admitted.* Now, if this be his rule, I demand of him, whether, for a man to preserve himself, and that even with the destruction of the person assailing him; supposing that he cannot do it otherwise, be not as undeniable a dictate of natural reason, as any that he can pretend to be contradicted by Christ's *satisfaction*. And therefore, if he can lay aside Christ's *satisfaction*, though the scripture were never so express for it, in regard of the contrariety he pretends in it to reason; why may not we upon the same grounds assert the necessity of self-preservation in the instance of war, though the scripture expressly forbids it.

But we need not recur to this, for the warranting men under the gospel to defend their lives, though with the destruction of those that would take them away. Only this I allege as an *argument ad hominem*, which sufficiently shows, how slight and desultorious this man is in his principles and way of arguing, while at one time he frames to himself a principle for his present turn, and at another makes assertions, and raises discourses, which that principle most directly overthrows. Now all the fore-mentioned absurdities (with many more that might be reckoned) are the tenets of those who deny the article of the *Trinity*, because (forsooth) it is *impious* and *absurd*; that is, who strain at one *gnat*, having already swallowed so many vast *camels*. And yet these are the persons, who in all their writings have the face to own themselves to the world for those heroes, whom God, by his special providence, has raised up to explain the christian religion, and to *reform the doctrine of the church*. I suppose, just in the same sense, that the school of *Calvin* was to reform her *discipline*.

And now in the last place; because this article

stands, as it were, in the very front of our religion, so that it is of very high concernment to all to be sound and thorough-paced in the belief of it; I shall show, 1. What have been the causes that have first unsettled, and at the last destroyed the belief of it in some. And, 2. What may be the best means to settle and preserve the belief of it in ourselves and others.

1. There are three things, which, I think, have been the great causes that have took some off from the belief of this article. As,

(1.) That bold, profane, and absurd custom of some persons, in attempting to *paint and represent it in figure*. He who *paints God*, does a contradiction; for he attempts to make that *visible*, which he professes to be *invisible*. The ministers of *Transylvania* and *Sarmatia*, rank asserters of the *Socinian* heresy, in a certain book,* (wherein they make *confession of their faith as to these articles*,) insist upon nothing so much, nor indeed so plausibly, for their rejection of the article of the Trinity, as those several strange *pictures and images of the Trinity*, which some persons had set up in several of their churches; sometimes describing it *by one head carved into three faces*, to which, so set up in a certain church, they subjoin this distich;

Mense trifrons isto Janum pater urbe bifrontem.

Expulit, ut solus regnet in orbe trifrons;

That is to say, that the God *having three faces*, had driven, or (if you will) *outfaced poor Janus out of the world, who had but two*. And likewise elsewhere such another;

Jane biceps, unni tacite lubentis origo;

Trifrontem pellas, ni miser esse velis.

Sometimes also they represent it by a *ring set with diamonds, in three equi-distant places of it*; and sometimes by the *picture of three men of an equal pitch sitting together at one table, and upon one seat*; and

* See a Latin book in 4to, entitled, *Præmonitiones Christi, & Apostolorum, per ministros quosdam in Sarmatia & Transylvania, &c.*

sometimes the same is expressed by the *image of an old man, a child, and a dove*; *signifying the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*: All which things being so contrary to the very natural notions which reason has of God, have brought many sober parts of the world to nauseate our whole religion, as only a new scheme of the old *Gentile* idolatry, and withal have warranted the fore-mentioned heretics to think they had cause for all those vile and wretched appellations, with which we show how they bespattered this divine mystery; which blasphemies will, no doubt, be one day laid at the door, not of those only who *denied*, but of those also who *painted* the Trinity, and, by so doing, made others to *deny* it. And indeed, so far has the common sort of mankind took offence at these things, that if the belief of a God were not very deeply imprinted in man's nature, such men's cursed irrational boldness would go very near to bring all those about them, by degrees, to question the very Deity itself.

(2.) The equally bold and insignificant terms which some of the schoolmen have expressed this great article by, who, pursuing their own *phænomena* as undoubted truths, speak as peremptorily of this profound mystery, as if it were a thing obvious to the first apprehensions of sense. It was a pious saying of an ancient writer, *Periculosum est de Deo etiam vera dicere*. No wonder therefore, if these men, discoursing of the nature of God, in a language neither warrantable nor apprehensible, have by their *modalities, suppositivities, circumincessions*, and twenty such other *chimeras*, so misrepresented this adorable article to men's reason, as to bring them first to loath and at length to deny it.

(3.) The imprudent building it upon some text of scripture, which indeed will evince no such thing. *Such* as those places which I mentioned out of the Old Testament; and *such*, as one of the ancients once brought for a proof of the eternal generation and Deity

of the *Word*, from that expression of *David*, in *Psal. xliv. Quisquamne dubitat de Divinitate Filii, cum legerit illud Psalmistæ, Cor meum eructavit verbum bonum?* Concerning which, and the like allegations, I shall only make one very obvious, but as true, and perhaps too true, a remark, that whatsoever is produced and insisted upon in behalf of any great point of religion, if it comes not close and home to the same, it is always found much more effectual to expose the *truth* it is brought for, than to support it, and to *confirm* the *heretic* it is brought against, than to *convince* him.

2. And thus having shown some of the causes that undermine men's belief of the article of the Trinity; I shall now assign some means also, to fix and continue it in such minds as do already embrace it. And these shall be briefly two.

(1.) To acquiescè in the bare revelation of the thing itself, and in those expressions under which it is revealed. As for the thing itself, God has expressly said, that there are *three* above the rank of created beings, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*. And as for the words in which he has conveyed this to us, they are few and intelligible, and to be conveyed just as they are proposed; that is, simply, and in general, and without entering too far into particulars.

(2.) To suppress all nice and over-curious inquiries into the peculiar nature, reason, and manner of this mystery. For God having not thought fit to reveal this to us any farther than he has yet actually done, sufficiently declares it to have been his intent, that it should indeed be no farther known, nor indeed searched into by us; and perhaps so far as it is yet unknown, it may, to a created reason, be also *unknowable*. For when we are once assured, that the thing itself *is*, to amuse ourselves and others, with bold, perplexing questions, (as they can be no better,) *how* and *which way* it comes to be so, especially in matters relating to Almighty God, must needs be equally irreverent and im-

pertinent. Those words of an ancient commentator upon St. John contain in them an excellent rule, and always to be attended to, *Firmam fidem mysterio adhibentes, nunquam, in tam sublimibus, illud quomodo aut cogitemus, aut proferamus.* Which rule, had it been well observed, both in this and some other articles of our religion, not only the peace of particular churches and consciences, but also the general peace of *Christendom*, might in great measure have been happily preserved by it.

Let this therefore be fixed upon, that there is no *obedience* comparable to that of the understanding; no temperance, which so much commends the soul to God, as that which shows itself in the restraint of our *curiosity*. Besides which two important considerations, let us consider also, that an over-anxious scrutiny into such mysteries is utterly useless, as to all purposes of a rational inquiry. It *wearies* the mind, but not *informs* the judgment. It makes us conceited and fantastical in our notions, instead of being sober and wise to salvation. It may provoke God also, by our pressing too much into the secrets of heaven and the concealed glories of his nature, to desert and give us over to strange delusions. For they are only *things revealed, which belong to the sons of men* to understand and look into: But as for such high mysteries as the Trinity, as the subsistence of *one nature in three persons*, and of three persons in one and the same individual nature, these are to be reckoned in the number of such sacred and *secret things*, as belong to God alone perfectly to know, but to such poor mortals as we are, humbly to *fall down before, and adore.*

DISCOURSE X.*

PRETENCE OF CONSCIENCE, NO EXCUSE FOR REBELLION.

JUDGES xix. 30.

And it was so, that all that saw it, said, there was no such deed done or seen, from the day that the Children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt, unto this day: consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds.

THE occasion of these words was a foul and detestable fact, which had happened in one of the tribes of *Israel*; and the occasion of that fact was (as the text not obscurely intimates) the want of *kingly government* at that time. It being noted as a thing of particular remark, (*Judges* xxi. 25.) that this villany was committed, *when there was no king in Israel*, and when, as a natural consequent thereof, men resolved to live *at large*; every one, without check, doing *what was right in his own eyes*, or (according to the more sanctified language of our late times) *as the Spirit moved him*. Such a *liberty of conscience*, it seems, had they then got, *for serving the devil after his and their own way*.

As for the infamous actors in this tragical scene, we have them boldly owning their shameless fact in open

[* Originally dedicated "To the illustrious, blessed, and never-dying memory of Charles I., king of Great-Britain, &c. causelessly rebelled against, unhumanly imprisoned, and at length barbarously murdered before the gates of his own palace, by the worst of men, and the most obliged of subjects."—Ed.]

field, avowing it with sword in hand, and for some time defending the same with success against their brethren, then the peculiar people of God, twice routed and slaughtered before them in a righteous cause ; a cause managed by all the rest of the tribes engaged in it, and that not more with the proper arms of war in one hand, than with a commission from God himself in the other. In which, and the like respects, so great a resemblance must needs be acknowledged between this and the late civil war amongst ourselves, that the proceedings of *Forty-one*, and the following years, may well pass for the *devil's works in a second edition*, or a foul and odious *copy*, much exceeding the foulness of the *original*.

I profess not myself either skilled or delighted in mystical interpretations of scripture ; nor am I for forcing or wiredrawing the sense of the text, so as to make it designedly foretell the king's death and murder ; nor to make *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, (as some enthusiasts have done,) the adequate scene for the prophetic Spirit to declare future events upon ; as if (forsooth) there could not be so much as a few houses fired, a few ships taken, or any other calamitous accident befall this little corner of the world, but that some apocalyptic *ignoramus* or other must presently find and pick it out of some abused, martyred prophecy of *Ezekiel, Daniel*, or the *Revelation*. No, I pretend not to any such illuminations. I am neither *prophet* nor *prophetic prelate*, but account it enough for my purpose, if I can bring my present business and the text together, not by *design*, but *accommodation* ; and as the words themselves are very apposite, so I doubt not but to find such a parallel in the things expressed by them, that it may be a question, whether the subject of the text, or of this *mournful day*, may have a better claim to the *expression*.

The crime here set off with such high aggravations, was an injury done to one single *Levite*, in the vil-

lanous rape of his concubine ; a surprising passage, I confess, to us, who have lived in times enlightening men to the utmost *contempt of the ministry*, as a principal part (or rather, whole) of *their religion* : Nevertheless we see how, even in those *dark times of the law*, (as our late saints used to call them,) the resentment of the wrong done to *this poor Levite* rose so high, that it was looked upon as a sufficient ground for a *civil war*, and accordingly made the concern of all *Israel*, to revenge this quarrel upon the whole tribe of *Benjamin*, for abetting the villany. This was the unanimous judgment of the eleven tribes, and a war was hereupon declared, in which the conduct was by divine designation appointed to the *royal tribe of Judah* ; the *sceptre* being judged by God himself most concerned to assert the privileges of, and revenge the injuries done, the *crozier* ; the *crown* to support the *mitre* ; and in a word, the *sovereign* authority to vindicate and abet the *sacerdotal*, as well as to be blessed by it.

But now, to come to the counterpart of the story. He who dates the murder of King *Charles* the First from the fatal blow given upon the scaffold, judges like him who thinks that it is only the last stroke which fells the tree. No, the *killing of his person* was but the consummation of the *murder first begun in his prerogative*. And *Pym*, and some like him, did as really give a stroke towards the cutting down this royal oak, as *Ireton* or *Cromwell* himself. Few, I believe, but have heard of that superfine, applauded invention of theirs, of a *double capacity* in the king, *personal* and *politic*. And, I suppose, the two noted factions, which then carried all before them, distinguished in him these two, that so to keep pace with one another, each of them might destroy *him under one*.

For as for those,* whose *post-dated* loyalty now consists only in decrying that *action*, which had been

*The Presbyterian faction.

taken out of their hands, by others more cunning, though no less wicked than themselves, who, having laid the premises, afterwards ridiculously protest against the conclusion, they do but cover their prevarication with a fig-leaf, there being no more difference between both parties, but only this, that the former used all their art and industry, to give these infamous contrivers of this murder the best colour and disguise they could; whereas their younger brother, the Independent, thought it the safest and surest way, to *disguise* only the *executioner*.

Well then, when a long sunshine of mercy had ripened the sins of the nation, so that it was now ready for the shakings of divine vengeance, the seeds of faction and rebellion having for a long time been studiously sowed by *seditionous libels*, and well watered with *schismatical lectures*; the first assault was made against the clergy, by a pack of inveterate enemies to the church, the fury of whose lust and ambition nothing could allay, but a full power and liberty (which they quickly got) to seize her privileges, prostitute her honours, and ravish her revenues; till at length, being thus *mangled and broke in pieces*, (as the *Levite's* concubine was before her,) she became a ghastly spectacle to all beholders, to all the *Israel* of God.

Such therefore was then the woful condition of our church and clergy, upon the Puritans' invasion of their rights, at the breaking out of the late civil war. In which (as we hinted before in the *Levite's* case) so amongst ourselves also, the cause of our oppressed church was owned, and sheltered by the royal standard, and the defence of the *ministry* (as most properly it should be) managed by the *defender of the faith*. But, alas! the same angry providence still pursuing the best of kings and causes with defeat after defeat, the *lion* falling before the *wolf*, as *Judah* (the royal tribe) sometimes did before *Benjamin*, the king himself came to be in effect first unkinged, and all his roy-

alties torne from him, before the year 1645; and then at last, to complete the whole tragedy in his *person*, as well as *office*, *Charles* was murdered in 1648.

And this is the black subject and occasion of this day's solemnity. In my reflections upon which, if a just indignation, or indeed even a due apprehension of the blackest fact which the sun ever saw, since he hid his face upon the crucifixion of our Saviour, chance to give an edge to some of my expressions, let all such know, the guilt of whose actions has made the very strictest truths look like satyrs, and bare descriptions sharper than invectives; I say, let such censurers (whose innocence lies only in their indemnity) know, that to drop the blackest ink and the bitterest gall upon this fact, is not satyr, but propriety.

And now, since the text here represents the whole matter set forth in it, in these most remarkable words; *That there was no such deed done or seen, for many ages before*; and with which words I shall clothe the sad subject before us; I conceive the most proper prosecution thereof, as applied to this occasion, will be to show wherein the unparalleled strangeness of this deed consists. And for this, since the nature is not to be accounted for, but from a due consideration of the agent, the object, and all that retinue of *circumstances*, which do attend, and specify it under a certain *denomination*, I shall accordingly distribute my discourse into these materials. I shall consider,

I. The person that suffered. II. The preparation and introduction to his suffering. III. The quality of the agents who acted in it. IV. The circumstances and manner of the fact. And V. The dismal and destructive consequences of it. Of all which in their order; and

I. For the first of them; *the person suffering*. He was a *king*; and what is more, *such a king*, not *chosen*, but *born* to be so; that is, not owing his kingdom to the vogue of the populace, but to the suffrage of na-

ture. He was a *David*, a *saint*, a *king*, but never a *shepherd*. Some of all the royal blood in Christendom ran in his veins; that is to say, *many kings* went to the making of *this one*.

And his improvements and education fell no ways below his extraction. He was accurate in all the recommending excellencies of human accomplishments, able to *deserve*, had he not *inherited* a kingdom; of so controlling a genius, that in every science he attempted, he did not so much *study*, as *reign*, and appeared not only a *proficient*, but a *prince*. And to go no farther for a testimony; let his own writings witness so much, which speak him no less an *author* than a *monarch*; composed with such an unfailing accuracy, such a commanding, majestic *pathos*, as if they had been writ not with a *pen*, but with a *sceptre*. And for those, whose virulent and ridiculous calumnies ascribe that incomparable piece* to others, I say, it is a sufficient argument that those *did not* write it, because they *could not* write it. It is hard to counterfeit the spirit of majesty, and the unimitable peculiarities of an incommunicable genius and condition.

At the council-board he had the ability still to give himself the best council, but the unhappy modesty to diffide in it; indeed his only fault; for modesty is a paradox in majesty, and humility a solecism in supremacy.

Look we next upon his piety and unparalleled virtues; though without an absurdity, I may affirm, that his very endowments of nature were supernatural. So pious was he, that had others measured their obedience to him by his obedience to God, he had been the

[* The spuriousness of the *Eikon Basilike*, or, in other words, the claim of Bishop Gauden to the composition of that work, seems now to be allowed and put at rest; so far, at least, as it is reasonable ever to expect, on a point of literary history so remote. A condensed view of the evidence on either side, may be seen in recent numbers of the *Edinburgh* and *London Quarterly Reviews*. According to Rees, seventeen editions of the *Eikon Basilike* were sold within a few months after its appearance.—Ed.]

most absolute monarch in the world ; as eminent for frequenting the temple, as *Solomon* for building one. No occasions ever interfered with his devotions, nor business of state ate out his times of attendance in the church. So firm to the protestant cause, though he conversed in the midst of temptation, in the very bosom of *Spain*, and though *France* lay in *his*,* yet nothing could alter him, but that he espoused the cause of religion, even more than his beloved queen.

He every way filled the title, under which we prayed for him. He could defend his religion as a king, dispute for it as a divine, and die for it as a martyr. I think I shall speak a great truth, if I say, that the only thing that makes protestantism considerable in Christendom, is the church of *England* ; and the great thing that does now cement the church of *England*, is the blood of this blessed saint.

He was so skilled in all controversies, that we may well style him in all causes ecclesiastical, not only supreme *governor*, but *moderator*, nor more fit to fill the *throne* than the *chair* ; and withal so exact an observer, and royal rewarder of all such performances, that it was an encouragement to a man *to be a divine* under such a *prince*.

Which eminent piety of his, was set off with the whole train of moral virtues. His temperance was so impregnable, amidst all those allurements with which the courts of kings are apt to melt even the most stonical minds, that he did at the same time both teach and upbraid the court ; so that it was not so much their own vice, as his example, that rendered their debauchery unexcusable. Look over the whole list of our kings, and take in the kings of *Israel* to boot, and who ever kept the bond of conjugal affection so inviolate ? *David* was chiefly eminent for repenting in this matter ;

[* This alludes to the clandestine visit of Charles (then Prince) to Spain, attended only by Buckingham, with the view of espousing the Infanta of that kingdom ; and to his union,—that project being defeated— with Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry the Fourth, of France.—Ed.]

Charles for not needing repentance. None ever of greater fortitude of mind, which was more resplendent in the conquest of himself, and in those miraculous instances of passive valour, than if he had strewed the field with all the rebel armies, and to the justness of his own cause joined the success of theirs; and yet withal so meek, so gentle, so merciful, and that even to a cruelty to himself, that if ever the lion and the lamb dwelt together, if ever courage and meekness united, it was in the breast of this royal person.

And, which makes the rebellion more ugly and intolerable, there was scarce any person of note amongst his enemies, who, even fighting against him, did not wear his colours, (*i. e.*) carry some peculiar mark of his former favours and obligations. Some were his own menial servants, and *ate bread at his table*, before they *lifted up their heel against him*. Some received from him honours, some offices and employments. I could mention particulars of each kind, did I think their names fit to be heard in a church, or from a pulpit. In short, he so behaved himself towards them, that their rebellion might be *malice* indeed, but it could not be *revenge*.

And these his personal virtues shed a suitable influence upon his government. For the space of seventeen years, the peace, plenty, and honour of the *English*, spread itself even to the envy of all neighbour nations. And when that plenty had pampered them into such an unruliness, and rebellion as soon followed it, yet still the justness of his government left them at a loss for an occasion; till at length *ship-money* was pitched upon, as fit to be reformed into excise and taxes, and the *burden of the subject* to be took off by plunders and sequestrations.

The king, now, to scatter that cloud, which began to gather and look black, both upon church and state, made those condescensions to their impudent petitions, that they had scarce any thing to make war for, but

what was granted them already ; and having thus stript himself of his prerogative, he made it clear to the world, that there was nothing left them to fight for, but only his life. Afterwards, in the prosecution of this unnatural war, what overtures did he make for peace ? Nay, when he had his sword in his hand, his armies about him, and a cause to justify him before God and man, how did he choose to compound himself into nothing, to *depose* and *unking* himself, by their unconscionable, unhuman conditions ? But all was nothing ; he might as well compliment a mastiff, or court a tyger, as think to win those, who were now hardened in blood, and thorough-paced in rebellion. The truth is, his conscience uncrowned him, as having a mind too pure and defecate, to admit of those maxims of state, that usually make princes great and successful.

Having thus with a new, unheard-of sort of loyalty fought against and conquered him, they commit him to prison ; and then the king himself notes, that it has been always observed, that there is but *little distance from the prisons of kings to their graves*. To which I farther subjoin, that where the observation is constant, there must needs be some certain standing cause of the connexion of the things observed. And indeed, it is a direct transition from the prison to the grave, à *carceribus ad metam*, the difference between them being only this ; that he who is buried, is imprisoned under ground, and he who is imprisoned, is buried above it. And I could wish, that as they thus slew and buried his body, so we had not also buried *his funeral*.

But to finish this poor, imperfect description, though it is of a person so renowned, that he neither needs the best, nor can be injured by the worst ; yet, in short, he was a prince, whose virtues were as prodigious as his sufferings, a true *pater patriæ*, a father of his country,

if but for this only, that he was the father of such a son.*

And yet this, the most innocent of men and the best of kings, so pious, learned, and judicious, so merciful and obliging, was rebelled against, driven out of his own house, pursued like a *partridge upon the mountains*, and like an exile in his own dominions, unhumanly imprisoned, and at length for a catastrophe of all, barbarously murdered; though in this, his murder was the less of the two, in that his death released him from his prison.

II. Having thus seen *the quality and condition* of the person who suffered; let us, in the next place, see *the engines and preparations*, by which they gradually ascended to the perpetration of this bloody fact. And indeed, it would be but a poor, preposterous discourse, to insist only upon the *consequent*, without taking notice of the *antecedent*.

It were too long to dig to the spring of this rebellion, and to lead you to the secrecies of its first contrivance. But as *David's* phrase is upon another occasion, it was *framed and fashioned in the lowest parts of the earth, and there it was fearfully and wonderfully made* a work of darkness and retirement, removed from the eye of all *witnesses*, even that of *conscience* also; for conscience was not admitted to their councils.

But the first design was to procure a *Levite* to consecrate their *idol*, that is to say, a factious ministry, to christen it the *cause of God*. They still owned their party for *God's true Israel*; and being so, it must needs be their duty to come out of *Egypt*, though they provided themselves a *Red Sea* for their passage.

And then for their assistance they repair to the

[*If, for *such* adulation as this—of which there are even grosser specimens—offered in the very presence of *such* a sovereign, the reader is at a loss to find any apology, the writer himself may possibly furnish it. He was under the influence of what he supposes a part of the royal prerogative, and which he has elsewhere described. See some paragraphs from a sermon on “the Protection of Kings, the peculiar care of Providence,” (Selections, the latter part of this volume.)—ED.]

Northern steele;* and bring in an unnatural, mercenary army, which like a shoal of locusts covered the land; such, as inherited the character of those, whom God brought as scourges upon his people the *Jews*. For still we shall read that God punished his people with an army from the North. Jer. i. 3. *Out of the North there cometh up a nation which shall make her land desolate.* Jer. iv. 6. *I will bring evil from the North, and a great destruction.*

Now, to endear and unite these into one interest, they invented a *covenant*, much like those who are said to have made a *covenant with hell, and an agreement with death*. It was the most solemn piece of perjury, the most fatal engine against the church, and bane of monarchy, the greatest snare of souls and mystery of iniquity, that ever was hammered by the wit and wickedness of man. I shall not, as they do, abuse scripture language, and call it the *blood of the covenant*, but give it its proper title; it was the *covenant of blood*. Such an one as the *brethren, Simeon and Levi*, made, when they were going about the like design. Their very posture of taking it was an ominous mark of its intent, and their *holding up their hands* was a sign that *they were ready to strike*.

It was such an oglio of treason and tyranny, that one† of their assembly, of their *own prophets*, gives this testimony of it, in his narrative upon it, and his testimony is true; *that it was such a covenant, whether you respect the subject matter, or occasion of it, or the persons that engaged in it, or lastly, the manner of imposing it, that was never read, nor heard of, nor the world ever saw the like*. The truth is, it bears no other likeness to ancient covenants, but that as at the making of them they *slew beasts and divided them*; so this

* This is no reflexion upon the *Scotch* nation, nor intended for such, there having been persons as eminent for their loyalty, piety, and virtue, of that country, as of any other: But it reflects upon that *Scotch faction*, which invaded *England* with an army in assistance of the rebels, and together with them made a shift to destroy the monarchy and the church in both kingdoms.

† Mr. Philip Nye.

also was solemnized with *blood, slaughter, and division.*

But that I may not accuse in general, without a particular charge, read it over as it stands before their *synod's works*, I mean *their catechism*; to which it is prefixed, as if, without it, their system of divinity were not complete, nor their children like to be well instructed, unless they were schooled to treason, and catechised to rebellion. I say, in the covenant, as it stands there, in the third article of it. After they had first promised to defend the privileges of parliament, and the liberties of the kingdoms, at length they promise also a defence of the king; but only thus, *that they will defend his person, in the preservation of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms.* In which it is evident, that their promise of loyalty to him is but *conditional*; bound hand and foot with this limitation, *so far as he preserved the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms.*

From which I observe these two things.

1. That those who promise obedience to their king, only so far as he preserves the true religion and the kingdom's liberties; withal reserving to themselves the *judgment* of what religion is *true*, what *false*, and when these liberties are invaded, when not; do by this put it within their power, to judge religion false, and liberty invaded, as they think convenient, and then, upon such judgment, to absolve themselves from their allegiance.

2. That those very persons, who thus covenant, had already, from pulpit and press, declared the religion and worship established in the church of *England*, and then maintained by the king, to be *popish* and *idolatrous*; and withal that the king had actually invaded their liberties. Now, for men to suspend their obedience upon a certain condition, which condition at the same time they declared not performed, was not to profess obedience, but to remonstrate the reasons of their intended disobedience.

And for a farther demonstration of what has been said, read the speech of that worthy knight,* at his execution upon *Tower-Hill*, on the 14th of *June* last ; where he says, that what the House of Commons did in their *acting singly*, and *by themselves*, (which was no less than *trying and murdering the king*, *proscribing his son*, and *voting down monarchy*, with much more, which he there says, *lay yet in the breast of the House*,) was but a more *refined pursuit of the designs of the covenant*. For the testimony of which person, in this matter, I have thus much to say ; that he who, having been sent commissioner from hence into *Scotland*, was the first contriver of the covenant there, was surely of all others the most likely to know the true meaning of it ; and being ready to die, was most likely then, if ever, to speak *sincerely what he knew*.

We see here the *doctrine of the covenant* ; see the use of this doctrine, as it was charged home with a suitable *application* in a war raised against the king, in the cruel usage and *imprisonment, killing, sequestering, undoing all who adhered to him*, voting no addresses *to himself* ; all which horrid proceedings, though his majesty now stupendously forgives, yet the world will not, cannot ever forget ; for his *indemnity* is not our *oblivion*.

And therefore for those persons, who now clamour, that they *are persecuted*, because they are no longer permitted to *persecute* ; and who choose rather to quit their *ministry* than to disown the obligation of the *covenant* ; I leave it to all impartial minds to judge, whether they do not by this declare to the world, *that they hold themselves obliged by oath, as they shall be able, to act over again all that has been hitherto acted by virtue of that covenant* ; and consequently, that they relinquish their places, not for being non-conformists to the church, but for being virtually rebels to the crown. Which makes them just as worthy to be *indulged*, as for a man to indulge a *dropsy* or a *malignant fever*, which is exasperated by mitigations, and inflamed by every cooling infusion.

* Sir Henry Vane.

But to draw the premises closer to the purpose. Thus I argue. That which was the proper means, that enabled the king's mortal enemies to make a war against him, and upon that war to conquer, and upon that conquest to imprison him, and lastly, upon that imprisonment inevitably put the power into the hands of those, who by that power in the end murdered him; that according to the genuine consequences of reason, was the natural cause of his murder. This is the proposition that I assert, and I shall not trouble myself to make the assumption.

And indeed, those who wipe their mouths and lick themselves innocent, by *clapping* this act upon the army, make just the same plea that *Pilate* did for his innocence in the death of Christ, because he left the execution to the soldiers; or that the *soldiers themselves* may make, for clearing themselves of all the *blood* that they have spilt, by charging it upon their *swords*.

I conclude, therefore, that this was the gradual process to this horrid fact; this the train laid, to blow up monarchy; this the step by which the king ascended the scaffold.

III. Come we now to show, who were *the actors* in this tragical scene: When through the anger of Providence, a thriving army of rebels had worsted justice, cleared the field, subdued all opposition and risings, even to the very *insurrections of conscience* itself; so that impunity grew at length into the reputation of piety, and success gave rebellion the varnish of religion; that they might consummate their villany, the gown was called in to complete the execution of the sword; and to make *Westminster-Hall* a place for taking away *lives*, as well as *estates*, a new court was set up, and judges packed, who had nothing to do with *justice*, but so far as they were fit to be the *objects* of it. In which, they first of all begin with a confutation of the civilian's notion of justice and jurisdiction, it being with

them no longer an *act of the supreme power*, as it was ever before defined to be. Such an inferior crew, such a mechanic rabble were they, having not so much as *any arms* to show the world, but what they *used in the rebellion*; that when I survey the list of the king's judges, and the witnesses against him, I seem to have before me a catalogue of *all trades*, and such as might better have filled the *shops* in *Westminster-Hall*, than sat upon the *benches*. Some of which came to be possessors of the *king's houses*, who before had no certain dwelling but the *king's highway*. And some might have continued tradesmen still, had not want, and inability to trade, sent them to a quicker and surer way of traffic, the wars.

Now, that a king, that such a king, should be murdered by such, the basest of his subjects; and not like a *Nimrod*, (as some sanctified railing preachers have called him,) but like an *Actæon*, be torn by a pack of blood-hounds; that the steam of a dunghill should thus obscure the sun; this so much enhances the calamity of this royal person, and makes his death as different from his, who is slain by another king, as it is between being torn by a *lion*, and being eaten up with *vermin*. An expression too proper, (I am sure,) as coarse as it is; for where we are speaking of *beggars*, nothing can be more natural than to think of *vermin* too.

For, that the feet should *trample upon*, nay kick off the head, who would not look upon it as a monster? But indeed of all others, these were the fittest instruments for such a work; for base descent, and poor education, disposes the mind to imperiousness and cruelty; as the most savage beasts are bred in *dens*, and have their extraction from *under ground*. These therefore were the worthy judges of a great king, even the refuse of the people, and the very scum of the nation; that is, at that time both the *uppermost*, and the *basest* part of it.

IV. Pass we now to *the circumstances of proce-*

dure, in the management of this ugly fact. And circumstances, we know, have the greatest cast in determining the nature of all actions, (as we commonly judge of any man's port and quality, by the nature of his attendants.)

First of all then ; it was not done, like other works of darkness, in secret, nor (as they used to preach) in a corner, but publicly, coloured with the face of justice, managed with openness and solemnity, as *solemn* as the *league* and *covenant* itself. History indeed affords us many examples of princes, who have been clandestinely murdered, which, though it be villainous, yet is in itself more excusable ; for he who does such a thing in secret, by the very manner of his doing it, confesses himself ashamed of the thing he does : But he who acts it in the face of the sun, vouches his action for laudable and heroic.

Having thus brought him to their high court of justice ; so called, I conceive, *because justice was there arraigned and condemned* ; or perhaps, therefore called a court of *justice*, because it *never showed any mercy*, whether the cause needed it or no. There, by a way of trial as unheard-of as their court, they permit him not so much as to speak in his own defence, but with the *innocence and silence of a lamb, condemn him to the slaughter*. And it had been well for them, if they could as easily have imposed *silence* upon his *blood* as upon himself.

Being condemned, *they spit in his face*, and deliver him to the affronts of soldiers. So that I wonder where the blasphemy lies, which some charge upon those, *who make the king's sufferings something to resemble our Saviour's*. But, is it blasphemy to compare the *king to Christ* in that respect, in which Christ himself was made like him ? Or can he be *like us* in all things, and *we not like him* ? Certainly there was something in that Providence, which so long ago appointed the chapter of our Saviour's pas-

sion, to be read on the day of the king's. And, I am sure, the resemblance is so near, that had he lived before him, he might have been a *type of him*. I confess there is some disparity in the case ; for they shew themselves worse than *Jews*. But however, since they make this their objection, that we make the king like Christ, I am willing it should be the greatest of their commendation, to be accounted as unlike Christ, as they meritoriously are.

Let us now follow him from their mock tribunal, to the place of his *residence till execution*. Nothing remains to a person condemned, and presently to leave the world, but these two things. 1. To take leave of his friends, a thing not denied to the vilest malefactors ; which sufficiently appears, in that it has not been *denied to themselves*. Yet no intreaties from him, or his royal consort, could prevail with the murderers, to let her take the last farewell and commands of a dying husband ; he was permitted to make no *farewell*, but to the *world*. Thus was he treated, and stript of all, even from the *prerogative of a prince*, to the privilege of a *malefactor*. 2. The next thing desired by all dying persons, is freedom to *converse with God*, and to prepare themselves to meet him at his great tribunal. But with an *Italian cruelty* to the soul, as well as the body, they debar him of this freedom also ; and even *solitude*, his former punishment, is now too great an *enjoyment*. But that they might show themselves no less enemies to *private*, than they had been to *public prayer*, they disturb his retirements, and with scoffs upbraid those devotions, which were then even interceding for them. And, I question not, but fanatic fury was then at that height, that they would have even *laughed at Christ himself* in his devotions, had he but used his *own prayer*.

With these preludiums is he brought to the last scene of mockery and cruelty, to a stage erected before his own palace ; and for the greater affront of majesty,

before that part of it in which he was wont to display his royalty, and to give audience to ambassadors, where now he could not obtain audience himself, in his last addresses to his abused subjects. There he receives the fatal blow ; there he dies, *conquering* and *pardon*ing his enemies ; and at length finds that faithfully performed upon the scaffold, which was at first so frequently and solemnly promised him in the parliament, and perhaps in the same sense, that he should be made a *glorious king*.

But even *this death* was the mercy of murderers, considering what kinds of death several proposed, when they sat in consultation about the manner of it. Even no less than *the gibbet and the halter*, no less than *to execute him in his robes*, and afterwards drive a stake through his head and body, to stand as a monument upon his grave. In short, all those kinds of death were proposed, which either their malice could suggest, or their own guilt deserve.

And could these men now find in their hearts, or have the face, *to desire to live* ? and to plead a *pardon* from the *son*, who had thus murdered the *father* ? I speak not only of those wretches, who openly imbrued their hands in the bloody sentence, but of those more considerable traitors, who had the villany to manage the contrivance, and yet the cunning to disappear in the execution, *and perhaps the good luck to be preferred after it*, and (for aught I know) *for it too*. And as for those who now survive, *by a mercy as incredible as their crime*, which has left them to the soft expiations of solitude and repentance (with plenty too attending both) ; though usually all the professions such make of repentance, are nothing else but the faint resentments of a *guilty horror*, *the last breathings of a gasping conscience* ; and as the mercy by which they live is made a visible defiance to government, and a standing encouragement to these daily alarms of plots and conspiracies, so I beseech God, that even their

supposed repentance be not such, that both themselves and the kingdom may hereafter have bitter cause too late to repent of it. But if they should indeed prove such as have no conscience but horror; who by the same crimes will be *made irreconcilable*, for which they deserved to be *impardonable*; who would resume those repentings upon *opportunity*, which they made on *extremity*, and *being saved from the gallows*, make the *usual requital*, which is made for that kind of *deliverance*; I say, if such persons should be only for a time chained up, like so many *lions* or *wolves* in the *tower*, that they may gather more fierceness, to run out at length upon majesty, religion, laws, churches, and the universities; whether God intends by this a repetition of our former confusions, or a general massacre of our persons (which is the most likely); the Lord in mercy fit us to endure the smart of a misimproved Providence, and the infatuate frustration of such a miraculous deliverance.

But to return to this sacred martyr. We have seen him murdered. And is there now any other scene for cruelty to act? Is not death the end of *the murderer's* malice, as well as of the life of him *who is murdered*? No; there is another and a viler instance of their sordid, implacable cruelty.

In the very embalming his body, and taking out those bowels, (which, had they not relented to his enemies, had not been so handled,) they gave order to those, to whom that work was committed, diligently to search and see, (I speak it with horror and indignation) whether his body were not infected *with some loathsome disease*.* I suppose they meant that, which some of his judges were so much troubled with, and stuck so close to them.

Now every one must easily see, that for them to *intimate the inquiry*, was in effect to *enjoin the report*. And here, let any one judge, whether the remorseless

* Gregory Clement knew what the disease was.

malice of imbittered rebels ever rose to such a height of tyranny, that the very embalming of his body must needs be a means to corrupt his name; as if his murder was not complete, unless, together with his life, they did also assassinate his fame.

But the body of that prince, innocent and virtuous to a miracle, had none of the ruins and *gentile rottenness* of our modern debauchery. It was firm and clear like his conscience; he fell like a cedar, no less *fragrant*, than tall and stately. Rottenness of heart and *of bones* are the badges of some of his murderers,* the noisomeness of *whose carcasses*, caused by the noisomeness of their lives, might even retaliate their sufferings, and while they are under *execution*, poison the *executioner*.

But the last grand, comprehensive circumstance of this fact, which is, as it were, the very form and spirit which did run through all the rest, is, that it was done with the Pretences of Conscience, and the protestations of religion; with eyes lift up to heaven, and expostulations with God, pleas of Providence, and inward instigations; till at length with much labour and many *groans*, they were delivered of their conceived mischief.

And certainly we have cause to deplore this murder with fasting, if it were but for this reason, that it was contrived and committed with fasting. Every fast portended some villany, as still a *famine* ushers in a *plague*. But as hunger serves only for appetite, so they never ordained an *humiliation*, but for the doing of something, which being done, might *dine* them at a *thanksgiving*. And such a fury did absurd piety inspire into this *church-militant* upon these exercises, that we might as well meet an *hungry bear*, as a *preaching colonel* after a fast; whose murderous humiliations strangely verified that apposite prophecy, (*Isaiah viii. 21.*) *When they shall be hungry, they shall curse their king, and their God, and look upwards;*

* Clement, Peters, &c..

that is, they should rebel and blaspheme devoutly. Though by the way, he who is always looking upwards, can little regard how he walks below.

But was there any thing in the whole book of God to warrant this rebellion? Any thing which, instead of obedience, taught them to *sacrifice him*, whom they were to obey? Why, yes: *Daniel dreamed a dream*, and there is also something in the *Revelation*, concerning a *beast*, a *little horn*, and the *fifth vial*, and therefore the king undoubtedly ought to *die*. But if neither you nor I can gather so much, or any thing like it, from these places, they will tell us, it is because we are not inwardly enlightened.

But others more knowing, though not less wicked, insist not so much upon the warrant of scripture, but plead *providential dispensations*: And then God's *works*, it seems, must be regarded before his *words*. And the *Latin* advocate,* who, like a *blind adder*, has spit so much poison upon the king's *person* and *cause*, speaks to the matter roundly. *Deum sicuti ducem, & impressa passim divina vestigia venerantes, viam haud obscuram, sed illustrem, & illius auspiciis commonstratam, & patefactam ingressi sumus*. But must we read God's mind in his *footsteps*, or in his *word*? This is, as if, when we have a *man's hand-writing*, we should endeavour to take his *meaning by the measure of his foot*.

But still, Conscience, Conscience is pleaded as a covering for all enormities, an answer to all questions and accusations. Ask, what made them fight against, imprison, and murder, their lawful sovereign? Why, *Conscience*. What made them extirpate the government, and pocket the revenue of the church? *Conscience*. What made them perjure themselves with contrary oaths? what makes *swearing* a sin, and yet *forswearing* to be none? what made them lay hold on

* Mr. John Milton; In Præfat, ad Defensionem pro populo Anglicano, (as his Latin is.)

God's promises, and break their own? *Conscience*. What made them sequester, persecute, and undo their brethren, rape their estates, ruin their families, get into their places; and then say, they only *robbed the Egyptians*? Why, still this large capacious thing, *their Conscience*; which is always of a much larger compass than their understanding. In a word, we have lived under such a model of religion, as has counted nothing *impious* but *loyalty*, nothing *absurd* but *restitution*.

But, O blessed God, to what an height can prosperous, audacious impiety arise! Was it not enough, that men once *crucified Christ*; but that there should be a generation of men who should also *crucify Christianity itself*? Must he, who taught *no defence* but patience, allowed *no armour* but *submission*, and never *warranted* any man to shed any other blood but his own, be now again mocked with *soldiers*, and vouched the patron of all those hideous murders and rebellions, which an ordinary impiety would stand amazed at the hearing of? and which in this world he has so plainly *condemned by his word*, and will hereafter as severely sentence *in his own person*? Certainly, these monsters are not only the *spots of Christianity*, but so many standing *exceptions from humanity and nature*: And since most of them are Anabaptists, it is pity that in repeating their baptism, they did not baptize themselves *into another religion*.

V. For the last place, let us view the horridness of the fact in *the fatal consequences* which did attend it. Every great villany is like a great *absurdity*, drawing after it a numerous train of *homogenous consequences*; and none ever spread itself into more than this. But I shall endeavour to reduce them all to these two sorts.

First, Such as were *of a civil*. *Second*, Such as were *of a religious concern*.

And *First*, for the civil, political consequences of it. There immediately followed a change of govern-

ment, of a government, whose praise had been proclaimed for many centuries, and enrolled in the large, fair characters of the *subjects' enjoyment and experience*. It was now shred into a democracy; and the stream of government being cut into many channels, ran thin and shallow: Whereupon the subject having *many masters*, every servant had so many distinct *servitudes*.

But the *wheel* of Providence, which only they looked upon, and that *even to a giddiness*, did not stop here; but by a fatal, ridiculous vicissitude, both the power and wickedness of those many, was again revolved and compacted *into one*: From that one* again it returned *to many*, with several attending variations, till at length we pitched upon *one again*;† one beyond whom they could not go, the *ne plus ultra* of all regal excellency, as all *change* tends to, and at last ceases upon its acquired *perfection*.

Nor was the government only, but also the glory of the *English* nation changed; distinction of orders confounded, the gentry out-braved, and the nobility, who voted the bishops out of their dignities in parliament, by the just judgment of God, thrust out themselves, and brought under the scorn and imperious lash of a *beggar on horseback*; *learning discountenanced*, and the *universities threatened*, *their revenues to be sold*, *their colleges to be demolished*; *the law to be reformed after the same model*; *the records of the nation to be burnt*.‡ Such an inundation of ruin, *reformation*, and confusion, had spread itself upon the whole land, that it seemed a kind of resemblance of *Noah's deluge*, in which only *a few men* survived amongst *many beasts*.

Second, The other sort of consequences were of a religious concernment. I speak not of the contempt, rebuke, and discouragement, lying upon the divines, or rather the *preachers*§ of those days; for they brought

* Cromwell.

† King Charles II.

‡ All this was sir *Henry Vane's* villanous and monstrous advice.

§ Presbyterians and Independents.

these miseries upon themselves, and had more cause a great deal to curse their own *sedition sermons*, than to curse *Meroz*. They sounded the first trumpet to rebellion, and like true saints had the grace to *persevere* in what they *first began*; courting and recognizing an usurper, calling themselves his *loyal and obedient subjects*,* never enduring so much as to think of their lawful sovereign, till at length *the danger of tythes*, their *unum necessarium*, scared them back to their allegiance.

I speak not therefore of these. But the great destructive consequence of this fact was, that it has left a lasting slur upon the protestant religion. *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Askelon*, lest the daughters of the *Philistines triumph*, lest the papacy laugh us to scorn; as, if they had no other sort of protestants to deal with, I am sure they well might.

I confess, the seditious writings of some, who called themselves protestants, have sufficiently bespattered their religion. See *Calvin* warranting *the three estates to oppose their prince*, 4 Instit. ch. 20. sec. 31. See *Master Knox's Appeal*, and in that his arguments for resisting *the civil magistrate*. Read *Mr. Buchanan's Discourse de jure Regni apud Scotus*. Read the *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*, under the name of *Junius Brutus*, writ by Ottoman the Civilian. See *Pareus* upon the thirteenth chapter of the epistle to the *Romans*, where he states *atrocem aliquam injuriam*, a large term, and of very easy application, to be a sufficient reason for subjects to take up arms against their king; a book, instead of the author, most deservedly burnt by the hangman. But shall we call this a comment upon the chapter? It is rather a comment upon the covenant. Both of which, as they teach the same doctrine, so they deserved, and justly had, the *same confutation*.†

* *Baxter* in his book dedicated to *Richard Cromwell* did so.

† Burnt by the common hangman in *Oxon*, by command of King *James the First*.

But these principles, like sleeping lions, lay still a great while, and were never completely actuate, nor appeared in the field, till the *French* holy league, and the *English* rebellion.

Let the *powder-plot* be as bad as it will or can, yet still there is as much difference between the *king's murder* and that, as there is between an *action* and an *attempt*. What the papal bulls and anathemas could not do, factious sermons have brought about. What was then contrived *against the parliament-house*, has been since *done by it*. What the *papists' powder* intended, the soldiers' *match* has effected. I say, let the powder-treason be looked upon (as indeed it is) as the product of hell, as black as the souls and principles that hatched it; yet still this reformation-murder will preponderate; and *January*, in villany, always have the precedency of *November*.

And thus, I have traced this accursed fact, through all the parts and ingredients of it. And now, if we reflect upon the quality of the person upon whom it was done, the condition of the persons who did it, the means, circumstances, and manner of its transaction; I suppose it will fill the measure, and reach the height of the words of the text: *That there was no such deed done, nor seen, since the day that the Children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt, to this day.*

For my own part, my apprehension of it over-bears my expression, and how to set it off, I know not; for *black receives no other colour*. But, when I call together all the ideas of horror, rake all the records of the *Roman*, *Grecian*, and *barbarian* wonders, together with new-fancied instances, and unheard-of possibilities, yet I find no parallel; and therefore have this only to say of the king's murder, that it is a thing, than which nothing can be imagined more *strange*, *amazing*, and *astomishing*, except its *pardon*.*

* This was far from being intended as a reflexion upon the act of indemnity itself, and much less upon the royal author of it, but only as a rhetorical attempt, for expressing the transcendent height of one thing, by an equally transcendent height of another; viz. by that of the *mercy pardoning*, and by that of the *crime pardoned*; both of them in their several kinds superlative.

And now, having done with the first part of the text, does it not naturally engage me in the duty of the second? Must such a deed, as was neither seen nor heard of, be also neither spoken of? Or must it be stroked with smooth, mollifying expressions? Is this the way to cure the *wound*, by pouring *oil upon* those that made it? And must *Absalom* be therefore dealt with *gently*, because he was an unnatural and a sturdy rebel?

If, as the text bids, *we consider* of the fact, and *take advice*, (that is, advise with reason and conscience,) we cannot but obey it in the following words, and *speak our minds*. For could *Cræsus's* dumb son speak at the very attempt of a murder upon his prince and father? and shall a preacher be dumb, when such a murder is actually committed?

Or do we think it enough to make doleful harangues against murder and cruelty, and concerning the prerogative of kings, without ripping up the particular, mysterious, diabolical arts of its first contrivance. Can things unheard-of be treated with the *toothless generalities* of a common-place?

I will not be so uncharitable, as to charge a *consent* in this particular, wheresoever I *find a silence*: I will only conclude such to be wiser than others, and to wait for another turn; and from their *behaviour* rationally collect *their expectation*. But whosoever is so sage, so prudential, or (to speak more significantly) *so much a politician*, as to fit himself for every change, he will find, that if ever another turn befalls the nation, it will be the wrong side outwards, the lowest uppermost. And therefore, for these silent candidates of future preferment, I wish them no other punishment for the *treason of their desire*, than to be *preferred under another change*.

But I have not yet finished my text, nor according to the command of it, *spoke all my mind*. I have one thing more to propose, and with that to conclude.

Would you be willing to see this scene acted over

again? to see that restless, plotting humour, which now ferments in many traitorous breasts, once more display itself, in the dismal effects of war and desolation? Would you see the rascality of the nation, in troops and tumults beleager the royal palace? Would you hear ministers absolving their congregations from their sacred oaths of allegiance, and sending them into the field to lose their lives and their souls, in a professed rebellion against their sovereign? Would you see an insolent over-turning army, in the heart and bowels of the kingdom, moving to and fro, to the terror of every thing which is noble, generous, or religious? Would you see the loyal gentry harassed, starved, and undone, by the oppression of base, insulting, grinding *committees*? Would you see the clergy torn in pieces, and sacrificed by the inquisition of *synods*, *tryers*, and commissioners?

And to mention the greatest, last; would you have the king, with his *father's kingdoms*, inherit also his *fortune*? Would you see the crown trampled upon, majesty haled from *prison to prison*; and at length with the vilest circumstances of spite and cruelty, bleeding at the feet of bloody, unhuman miscreants? Would you, now Providence has cast out the destructive interest from the Parliament, and the *House* is pretty well *swept* and *cleansed*, have the old *unclean spirit* return, and take to *itself seven spirits*, seven other interests worse than itself, and dwell there, and so make our *latter end worse than our beginning*?

We hear of plots and combinations, parties joining and agreeing; and let us not trust too much in their opposition amongst themselves. The elements can fight, and yet unite into one body. *Ephraim* against *Manasseh*, and *Manasseh* against *Ephraim*; but both equally against the royal tribe of *Judah*. Now if we dread these furies again being let loose upon us, oh! let us fear the return of our former provocations. If we would keep off the axe from our princes and nobles, let us lay it to our sins. If we would preserve

their lives, let us amend our own. We have complained of armies, committees, sequestrators, tryers, and decimators. But our sins, our sins, are those that have sucked the blood of this nation; these have purpled the scaffold with the royal gore; these have plowed up so many noble families, made so many widows, and snatched the bread out of the mouths of so many poor orphans. It is our *not fearing God*, that has made others not to *honour the king*; our not benefitting by the ordinances of the church, that has enriched others with her spoils.

And now, since I have slid into a mention of the church of *England*, which at this time is so much struck at, and in danger (like its first Head) to be crucified between *two thieves*; I shall say thus much of it; that it is the only church in Christendom we read of, whose avowed principles and practices disown all resistance of the civil power; and which the saddest experience, and the truest policy and reason will evince to be the only one, that is durably consistent with the *English* monarchy. Let men look both into its doctrine and into its history, and they will find neither the *Calvins*, the *Knoxes*, the *Junius Brutuses*, the *synods*, nor the holy commonwealths of the one side, nor yet the *Bellurmines*, the *Escobars*, nor the *Marianas* of the other. It has no fault but its revenues; and those too but the remainders of a potent, surfeited sacrilege. And therefore, if God in his anger to this kingdom should suffer it to be run down, either by the impious nonsense and idolatry of one party, or the sordid tyranny and fanaticism of the other; yet we will acquiesce in this, that if ever our church falls, it falls neither tainted with the infamy of *popish plots*, nor of *reforming rebellions*; and that it was neither her pretended corruption or superstition, but her own lands, and the kingdom's sins, that destroyed her.

For when I hear of seditious designs, covenants, and plots, they do not much move or affright me. But

when I see the same covetousness, the same drunkenness and profaneness, that was first punished in ourselves, and then in our sanctified enemies; when I see joy turned into a revel, and debauchery *proclaim* itself louder than it can be *proclaimed against*; these, I must confess, stagger and astonish me; and I cannot persuade myself, that we were delivered to do all these abominations.

But if we have not the grace of Christians, have we not the hearts of men? Have we no bowels, no relentings? If the blood and banishment of our kings cannot move us, if the miseries of our common mother, the church, ready to fall back into the jaws of purchasers and reformers, cannot work upon us, yet shall we not at least pity our posterity? Shall we commit sins, and breed up children to inherit the curse? Shall the infants now unborn have cause to say hereafter in the bitterness of their souls, *Our fathers have eaten the sour grapes* of disobedience, and *our teeth are set on edge* by rebellions and confusions?

How does any man know, but the very oath he is swearing, the lewdness he is committing, may be scored up by God as one *item* for a new rebellion? We may be rebels, and yet neither vote in parliaments, sit in committees, or fight in armies. Every sin is virtually a treason; and we may be guilty of murder by breaking other commandments besides the sixth.

But at present *we are made whole*: God has by a miracle healed the breaches, cured the maladies, and bound up the wounds of a bleeding nation: What remains now, but that we take the counsel, that seconded a like miraculous cure: *Go, sin no more, lest a worse evil come unto thee?* But since our evil has been so superlative as not to acknowledge a worse; since our calamities having reached the highest, give us rather cause to fear a repetition, than any possibility of gradation; I shall dismiss you with the like, though something altered advice, *Go, sin no more, lest the same evil befall you.*

DISCOURSE XI.

THE DISGUISES OF SATAN.

2 COR. xi. 14.

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

HE who has arrived to that pitch of infidelity, as to deny that *there is a devil*, gives a shrewd proof, that he is deluded by him; and so by this very denial does unawares infer the thing, he would deny. There have indeed been some in all ages and religions, who have promoted the devil's *interests*, by arguing against his *being*. For that, which men generally most desire, is to go on in sin without control; and it cannot be more their desire, than the devil accounts it his *interest*, that they should do so. But when they are told withal, that he who tempts to sin now, is to execute God's wrath for our sin hereafter; the belief of a spirit, appointed to so terrible an office, standing so directly between them and their sins, they can never proceed smoothly in them, till such a belief be first taken out of the way; and therefore, no wonder if men argue against the thing they *hate*; and for the freer enjoyment of their lusts, do all they can to throw off a persuasion, which does but *torment them before their time*: This undoubtedly being the true, if not only ground of all the disputes men raise against *demons*, or *evil spirits*; that their guilt has made it *their concern*, that there should be *none*.

Nevertheless, on the other side, it must be considered, that the proving of *spirits* and *immaterial substances*, from the common discourses of the world upon this subject, has not hitherto proved so successful as might be wished. For that there are such finite, incorporeal beings, as we call *spirits*, I take to be a point of that moment, that the belief of it ought to be established upon much surer proofs, than such as are commonly taken from *visions* and *apparitions*, and the *reports* which use to go of them ; it having never hitherto been held for solid reasoning, to argue from what *seems*, to what *exists* ; or, in other words, from *appearances* to *things* ; especially since it has been found so frequent, for the working of a *strong fancy* and a *weak judgment*, to pass with many for *apparitions*. Nor yet can I think the same sufficiently proved, from several strange effects, which, (as historians tell us,) having sometimes happened in the world, and carrying in them the marks of a rational efficiency, (but manifestly above all human power,) have therefore by some been ascribed to *spirits*, as the proper, immediate causes thereof. For such a conclusion, I conceive, cannot be certainly drawn from thence, unless we were able to comprehend the full activity of all corporeal substances, especially the celestial ; so as to assign the utmost term which their activity can reach to ; which, I suppose, no sober reasoner, or true philosopher, will pretend to.

And therefore, in the present case, allowing the forementioned common arguments all the advantage of probability they can justly lay claim to ; yet if we would have a certain proof of the existence of finite *spirits*, good or bad, we ought, no doubt, to fetch it from the infallible word of *revelation* ; and so employ *faith* to piece up the defects of *science* ; which, as nothing but *faith* can do, so that man must by no means pretend to *faith*, who will not sell his assent under a demonstration ; nor indeed to so much as pru-

dence, who will be convinced by nothing but *experience*, when perhaps *the experiment* may prove his destruction. He who believes *that there is a devil*, puts himself into the ready way to escape him. But as for those modern Sadducees, who will believe neither *angel* nor *spirit*, because they cannot see them, and with whom *invisible* and *incredible* pass for terms equipollent; they would do wisely to consider, that as the fowler would certainly spoil his own game, should he not, as much as possible, keep out of sight; so the devil never plants his snares so skilfully and successfully, as when he conceals his person; nor tempts so dangerously, as when he can persuade men that there is no tempter.

But I fear I have argued too far upon this point already; since it may seem something inartificial for the sermon to *prove*, what the text had *supposed*. But since the infidelity of the present age has made the proof of that necessary, which former ages took for granted; I hope the usefulness of the subject will atone for what may seem less regular in the *prosecution*. It must therefore be allowed, (and that not only from the foregoing *probable* arguments, but much more from an infallible and divine testimony,) *that there is a devil, a Satan, and a tempter*. And we have him here presented to us, under such a strange kind of mask or vizard, that we cannot see him for *light*; and then surely he must needs walk undiscovered, who can make that, which discovers all things else, *his disguise*. But the wonder ought to abate, if we consider, that there is a light, which dazzles and deludes, as well as one which informs and directs; and that it is the former of these, which *Satan clothes himself with, as with a garment*. A light so far resembling that of *the stars*, that it still *rules by night*, and has always darkness both for its occasion and companion. The badge of truth is *unity*, and the property of falsehood, *variety*; and accordingly the devil appears all things, as he has occasion; *the priest*,

the *casuist*, the *reformer*, the *reconciler*, and, in a word, any thing but himself. He can change his voice, his dress, and the whole scene of his fallacies; and by a dexterous management of the fraud, present you with an *Esau* under the form of a *Jacob*; for the old serpent can shift his skin, as often as he has a turn to serve by his doing so. For it is a short and easy transition from *darkness* to *light*; even as near as the confines of *night* and *day*. So that this active spirit can quickly pass from one to the other, and equally carry on a *work of darkness* in both. We read of a *demonium meridianum*, though the sun, we know, is then highest, and the light greatest. The Psalmist tells us, not only of a *pestilence which walks in darkness*, but also of a *destruction which wasteth at noon-day*; and consequently that he who is the great manager both of the one and the other, is as much a *devil*, when he shines as *Lucifer*, as when he destroys as *Satan*.

Now the devil, I conceive, is represented to us thus transformed in the text; not so much in respect of what he is in his *person*, as in his *practice* upon men; for none ever conceals himself, but he has a design upon another. And therefore to prosecute the sense of the words, by as full a representation of his frauds, as I am able to give, I shall discourse of him in this method. I shall endeavour to show,

I. The way of his operation upon the soul, in conveying his fallacies into the minds of men. II. The grand instances in which he has played an angel of light, in the several ages of the church successively. III. And give caution against some principles, by which he is like to repeat the same cheat upon the world, if not prevented in time to come.

I. And first, for the influence he has upon the soul. To lay open here all the ways whereby this spiritual engineer works upon us, to trace the serpent in all his windings, is a thing, I believe, as much above a mere human understanding, as that is below an angelical;

but so far as the ducture of *common reason*, *scripture*, and *experience*, will direct our inquiries, we shall find that there are three ways, by which he powerfully reaches, and operates upon the minds of men. As,

1. By moving, stirring, and sometimes altering the humours and dispositions of the body. That the soul in all its operations is strangely affected by, and held down to the particular *crasis* and constitution of the corporeal part, is indubitable. And that the devil can model and frame the temperament of it to his own purpose, the woman whom *Satan is said to have bound for so many years*, is a convincing instance. Now this expert anatomist, who has examined and looked into all the secret recesses, caverns, and little fibres both of body and soul, (as I may so express the matter,) knows that there is no *grace*, but has its *counterfeit* in some *passion*; and no passion of the mind, but moves upon the wheel of some *humour* of the body. So that it is easy for him to refine, and, as it were, sanctify the fire and fury of a choleric humour *into zeal*, and raise the operations of melancholy to the semblance of a mortified demureness and *humiliation*. On which case of *supposed* sorrow for sin, but *real* disturbance from some other cause, it is not to be questioned, but many repair to the *divine*, whose best *casuist* were an *apothecary*; and endeavour to cure and carry off their *despair*, with a *promise*, or perhaps a *prophecy*, which might be better done with a *purge*. Poor self-deluding souls! often misapplying the blood of Christ under these circumstances, in which a little *effusion of their own* would more effectually work the cure; and *Luke as physician*, give them a much speedier relief, than *Luke as an evangelist*.

2. The devil can act upon the soul, by suggesting the ideas, and spiritual pictures of things (as they may be not unfitly called) to the *imagination*. For this is the grand repository of all the ideas and representations which the mind of man can work either *upon* or *by*.

So that Satan, our skilful artist, can as easily slide his injections into the fancy, as present a deluding image to the eye. From whence it is, that poor deluded women (followers of conventicles, or rather of such as meet them there) talk much of sudden *joys* and *raptures*, and secret *whispers of the Spirit*, with a great deal more of such cant ; in all which this grand impostor is still at his old work, and whether he speaks in the gentle, charming voice of a comforter, or roars in the terrible thunders of damnation, is, and ever was, *a liar from the beginning, and will be so to the end*. Again, some perhaps have had a text, of something a peculiar significancy, cast into their fancy ; as for instance (in *Jerem.*) *Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from shedding blood* ; whereupon they presently thought themselves commissioned, by an extraordinary call from heaven, to cut and slay all such as fought for the *crown and the church*, in the late infamous rebellion. Likewise it is very credible, that the same spirit can in discourse suggest smart sentences and strictures of wit, far surpassing the invention of the speaker ; for otherwise, whence can it be that persons known to be deplorably dull in other things, can yet be witty upon a subject *obscene*, or *profane* ? And no doubt, what the papists ridiculously said of *Luther*, may with great truth be said of many leading heretics, that the *devil furnished them with arguments*. For where the cause is his, he will never be wanting to give it an helping hand, but will be still with the heretic in his study, guiding his pen, and assisting his invention with many a lucky turn of thought, and sophistical reasoning. So that upon the whole matter, the devil himself may, perhaps, more properly pass for the heretic ; and *Arius* or *Socinus* only for the amanuensis. For he is able to present *images* of words and sentences to the imagination, in as clear and perspicuous an order, as the most faithful and methodical memory. And why should the common word

be, that the *devil stands at the lyar's elbow*, if he were not to be his *prompter*? But

3. The devil can work upon the soul, by an actual *ingress into*, and *personal possession of* the man, so as to move and act him ; and like a kind of vicarious soul, use his body, and the several faculties and members thereof, as instruments of the several operations which he exerts by them. Upon which account, persons so possessed were heretofore called *πνευματοφόροι*, and *ἐνεργούμενοι*. And if any one here should doubt, that a *spirit* can impel a *body*, since without quantity and dimensions on both sides there can be no *contact* ; and since without *contact* some think all impulsions impossible, this maxim, if too far insisted upon, would bear as hard upon the soul itself, as to its moving the body, (allowing it to be a spiritual, immaterial substance, which, I hope, in a christian auditory, needs not to be proved.) And now, the premises thus supposed, how easy must it be for this spirit to cast any person possessed by him into a kind of prophetic ecstasy, and, with other amazing extravagancies, to utter through him certain sentences and opinions, and in the utterance thereof, to intermix some things good, to take off the suspicion, and qualify the poison of the bad? For so the *sibyls* used to wait, till at a certain time the *demons* entered into them, and gave answers by them, suspending the natural actings of their souls, and using their bodily organs of speech, with strange, prodigious convulsions, and certain circumstances of raving and unseemly horror attending them ; as *Virgil* elegantly describes the *Cumæan sibyl*, in his 6th *Æneid*.

—*Subitò non vultus, non color unus,*

Non comptæ mansere comæ, sed pectus anhelum,

Et rabie fera corda tument ; majórq ; videri,

Nec mortale sonans, &c.

Of which words, the *Quakers* amongst us (as little as they deal in *Latin*) have yet been the best and fullest interpreters, by being the liveliest instances of the

thing described in them, of any that I know. And so likewise in the case of the person possessed, (*Acts* xix. 16.) Certainly he could never have prevailed over so many men, had he not had something in him, stronger than man. But what needs there any farther arguing, or how is it possible for that man to question, whether the devil can enter into, and take possession of men, who shall read how often our Saviour cast him out?

These, I say, are the *physical* ways of operation, which the devil can employ so, as to insinuate thereby his impostures, in a clever, unsuspected manner; which three general ways doubtless may be improved, by so experienced a craftsmen, into myriads of particulars. But I shall confine myself to his dealings with the church, and that only within the times of Christianity; and so pass

II. To show *the grand instances, in which the devil, under this mask of light, has imposed upon the christian world.* And here we must premise this general observation, as the basis of all the ensuing particulars; viz. that it has been the devil's constant method to accommodate his impostures to the most received and prevailing notions, and the peculiar proper improvements of each particular age. And accordingly, let us take a survey of the several periods of them. As,

1. The grand ruling principle of the first ages of the church, then chiefly consisting of the *gentile converts*, was an extraordinary zeal and concern *for the worship of one only God*, having been so newly converted from the *worship of many*. Which great truth, since the devil could neither seasonably nor successfully oppose then, he saw it his interest to swim with the stream, which he could not *stem*, and by a dexterous turn of hand, to make use of *one truth* to supplant *another*. Accordingly, having met with a fit instrument for his purpose, he sets up in *Arianism*, and with a bold stroke strikes at no lower an article than the Godhead of the Son of God; and so manages this universal hatred of

polytheism to the rejection of a trinity of *divine co-equal persons*, as no ways consistent with the *unity of the divine essence*. The blasphemy of which opinion needed, no doubt, a more than ordinary artist, to give it the best gloss he could, and therefore was not to be ushered into the world, but by very plausible and seemingly pious pleas.

As for instance; that the ascribing of a divine nature to Christ, was not so much a *removal* of polytheism, as a *change*. That for Christ to decry the pagan gods, and yet assume the Godhead to himself, was, instead of being their *reformer*, to be their *rival*; and that by thus transferring divine worship to his own person, he did not so much *destroy* idolatry, as *monopolize* it. Moreover, that Christ himself professes his *Father to be greater than he*; and therefore, that either he himself is not God, or if so, that the *Deity* then includes not the highest degree of perfection. And if it should be here replied, that the Father is greater in respect of a *personal* excellency, but not of a *natural*; such as reply so, should do well to consider, how it can be, that where *essence* includes *all perfection*, *personality* can add any farther. Besides, that the granting Christ *to be the Son of God* will not therefore infer him *to be God*. For the son of a king is but his father's subject; and consequently, to assert any more concerning Christ, seems to be only paganism refined, and idolatry in a better dress.

These, I say, were the *Arian* objections against the Deity of our Saviour; all of them extremely sophistical and slight, and such as the heathen philosophers had urged all along against the christian religion, for near three hundred years before *Arius* was born: And we shall find them grounded only upon their not distinguishing between perfection *absolute* and *relative*, and their absurd arguing from *finite* and *created beings* to a Being *infinite* and *uncreate*; as might easily be shown in each of the foregoing particulars, would the

time permit. So that it was a true remark ; *that if we take from heretics disputing against any article of the christian faith, what is common to them with the heathens disputing against the whole body of Christianity, they will have little or nothing left them, which is peculiarly their own.* Nevertheless, such plausible stuff, backed with power, and managed by the devil, drew over most of the christian churches, for a considerable time, to *Arianism* ; and so, by a very preposterous way of worship, made them sacrifice the *Son* to the honour of the *Father*. But

2. As the *Arian* ages had chiefly set themselves to run down our *Saviour's divinity* ; so the following ages, by an ἀμετρία τῆς ἀνθολκῆς, a kind of contrary stretch, were no less intent upon paying an exorbitant devotion to every thing belonging to his humanity ; and in a very particular manner, to those who had eminently done and suffered for his person and religion. And this was the course all along taken by the *papal heresy*, from the very first that it got footing in the church ; touching which, let none think it strange, that I make an immediate step from the times of *Arianism* to those of *Popery*, (as if there ought to be a greater interval put between them.) For though it must be confessed, that *Arianism* received its mortal wound by the first council of *Nice*, pretty early in the fourth century ; yet these following heresies of *Macedonianism*, *Nestorianism*, *Eutychianism*, *Monothelism*, &c. (which, as different as they were amongst themselves, were yet, in truth, but so many shoots out of the old *Arian* stock,) continued longer, and reached considerably beyond the sixth century ; about the end whereof, *Popery* began to show itself by degrees : (*Gregory* the Great, who lived till the year of our Lord 604, being, not without cause, reckoned the *last* of the *good* popes of *Rome*, and the *first* of the *bad* ;) so that in truth there was no vacancy of time, between the *Arian* poison ceasing, and the *popish* ferment beginning to infest the church.

Well then, the Deity of Christ having been thus irrefragably proved, and *Arianism*, with its appendent heresies, at length drawing off the stage, and another predominant principle coming on ; it was now time for the grand deceiver to change his hand, being to work upon quite different *materials*, as well as with quite different *instruments* ; and so to turn that vast honour, which the world bore to Christ's *human nature*, to the depraving and undermining of Christianity itself. For from hence men came to give that inordinate veneration to the sacrament of Christ's body and blood ; and for the defence thereof invented that monster of absurdities, *transubstantiation*. After which, with great industry, they got together and kept all *reliques*, which any way represented his memory, as pieces of the *cross*, and *pictures* of his *body*, till at length they even adored them ; and, to justify their so doing, they cast their *practice* into a *doctrine*, that the *crucifix* was to be *adored with relative divine worship* ; more than which (by the way) the heathens themselves never gave to their idols ; but worshipped them only so far as they were significations of those effects and benefits for which they adored the Deity, the great original of them. But this superstition stopped not here, but extended itself likewise to Christ's friends and followers, the *saints* ; those especially, who, as I noted before, had sealed their profession with their blood. The memory of whom they celebrated with solemn invocations of them at their sepulchres, making offerings to them, falling prostrate at the very mention of their names ; till at length this reverential *respect* grew into down-right *adoration*. And thus by degrees paganism came to be christened into a new name, by their setting up their *divi*, or begodded tutelar *saints*, and prosecuting their *apotheosis* with divine worship. And lest in this they might seem to entrench upon the honour of Christ, by treating his saints and servants upon equal terms with himself, they made their very

zeal for his *honour*, a plea for their making these saints their *intercessors* with him ; alleging (forsooth) their own unworthiness to approach him by a direct address, without such a *mediation* ; as subjects do then most acceptably petition their earthly prince, when their suits are handed to him by some beloved favourite : a shrewd argument, no doubt, if God and man proceeded by the same methods. But to go on : Since religion would be but a very lame institution, should not *points of faith* be seconded with suitable *rules of practice* ; hereupon mortification and austerity of life were (in show at least) equally advanced, and Satan began to play the *white* devil, by prohibiting, upon pretence of higher sacerdotal purity, the marriage of the clergy, (though at the same time reckoned by themselves a sacrament,) forbidding also certain sorts of meat, and enjoining others ; as likewise imposing *hair-shirts*, *whips*, *scourges*, with many more such corporal severities ; for the recommending of all which to men's use, they taught them, that these practices were *satisfactory* for sin, and *meritorious* of heaven. And lest this might seem to derogate from *Christ's satisfaction*, (as it certainly did,) they distinguished sins into *mortal* and *venial*. And whereas they held, that these *venial* sins could not deserve eternal death, and withal, that many men die before they have completed their repentance ; for them they invented a certain place in the other world, for the temporal, penal expiation of such sins ; to wit, *purgatory*. And since the pains of this were not to be *eternal*, but that a deliverance and redemption of the souls held therein might be procured ; and that by the *merit of the good works of others*, to help out those who had none of their own ; they came from hence to assert works of *supererogation* (as they called them.) Which good works, and the merit of them, not being always actually employed for the benefit of any, (and as if the world abounded more with good works than bad,) they are said to be reserved in

the *treasury of the church*, to be disposed of (as there should be occasion) to such as were able and willing to ransom their suffering friends with silver and gold, (the very best of metals, and always held by them a valuable price for souls,) and this produced *indulgences*; the most useful part of the whole *Romish* religion.

By all which particulars put together, you may see the curious concatenation of the several mysteries and intrigues of popery; and how artificially one is linked to the other, *in this chain of darkness* made to hold poor souls *to the judgment of the great day*; and (if God be not so merciful, as to save them in spite of their religion) to *condemn them* in it too. And now these tenets being advantaged by the suitableness of them to man's natural disposition, (which in matters of belief is too prone to credulity and *superstition*, and in matters of practice, to an arrogant opinion of merit; every man being too apt to think that a good action obliges God, and satisfies for an ill one :) these tenets, I say, were upon these terms easily imbibed by the vulgar, in those times of ignorance; which ignorance also was carefully kept up, by maintaining the sufficiency of an *implicit faith*, and securing the scriptures under the double lock, of an unknown language, and a bad translation. Besides all which, that they might not in the last place want a strong hold to defend them, in case this terrible book of the Scriptures should come to be unsealed, and let loose upon them, they had two other refuges to fly too; to wit, that of *unwritten traditions*, without which they held the *scriptures imperfect*; and of an *infallible judge*, without which they affirmed them to be *obscure*: two qualifications which must unavoidably render the scriptures an incompetent rule of faith. And thus the nail is driven home, and riveted too; and upon their being hereby made judges in their own cause, they do, and must stand incorrigible; forasmuch as all conviction upon these terms is utterly impossible. And thus we

have seen what a lofty *Babel* has been raised by this grand architect of mischief and confusion, the *devil* : a *Babel*, with the *top* of it reaching to *heaven*, and the *foundation* of it laid in *hell*. And we have seen likewise the materials *with which*, and the arts *by which*, this stupendous structure was reared : and since neither *old* nor *new Babel* was built in a day ; we have given some account also, how this master-builder has all along suited his tools to the proper genius and condition of each several age ; sometimes working *in the light*, and sometimes *in the dark* ; sometimes *above ground*, and sometimes *under* it ; but in all, like a *Romish* priest, still under a *disguise*.

And here, I think, it may be farther worth our considering, that since the aspects and influences in heaven (which are some of the chief instruments, whereby providence governs this lower world) must needs work considerably upon the humours, and constitutions of men, under their several positions ; it cannot but follow, that the same must work very powerfully about the affairs of religion also, so far as the tempers of men are apt to strike in with them. And accordingly, as I have observed that Satan played his *papal game*, chiefly in the times of ignorance, and sowed his tares while the world was asleep ; *cùm Augustinus haberetur inexpugnabilis dialecticus, quod legisset categorias Aristotelis. Cùm qui Græcè sciret, suspectus ; qui autem Hebraicè, plane magicus putaretur*. When the words *hæreticum devita*, were looked upon as sufficient to warrant the taking away the life of an heretic ; so on the other side, when this mist of ignorance began to clear up, and polite learning to get footing again in the world, by the great abilities and industry of *Erasmus, Melancthon, Politian, Budæus, Calvin*, and several others, men generally then began to smell out the cheat ; and after a long growing suspicion of the imposture they had been held under, came at length to a

resolution quite to throw it off. But then again, lest so sudden and mighty a stream of light, breaking in upon the prince of darkness, might wholly over-bear all his projects, he also began wisely to light up *his candle* too in the new society of *Ignatius Loyola*; a sect composed of the best wits and ablest heads, that could be got, to list themselves to serve the pope under him. And by this course he quickly brought his myrmidons, to fight the Protestants at their own weapons, and for parts and literature to vie with the reformation. For he saw well enough, that it was learning, which must do his business, when ignorance was grown out of *fashion*; and that, when such multitudes were resolved to have *their eyes open*, it was time for him to *look about him* too. Accordingly, Satan, who loves to compass his ends, and amuse the world by contrary methods, (like the evil spirit in the gospel, sometimes casting the person possessed by him into the *fire*, and sometimes into the *water*) having, as we have noted, long imposed upon Christendom by Popery; and at length finding a new light sprung in upon a great part of it, and mightily chasing away that darkness before it, he thought it his interest to trump up a new scene of things, and so correspondently to the two main parts of religion, *speculative* and *practisal*, he fell upon two contrary but equally destructive extremes, *Socinianism* and *Enthusiasm*: thus, like a subtle disputant, casting his argument into such a dilemma, as should be sure to gain him his point, and gall his enemy one way or other.

And, 1. For the *First* extreme, *Socinianism*. *Faustus Socinus* seems to have been a person so qualified by providence with a competent stock of parts and measure of reason, (for the man was no miracle, either in divinity or philosophy) to shew, how wofully such an one (being left to himself) might blunder, and fall short of the right notions of religion, even in the plainest and most important points of it. *He was indeed so bred,*

and principled by his uncle *Lelius*, that Satan thought him a fit instrument, for the advancement of the *light of reason*, above that of *revelation*, by making (as he notoriously did) the *former* the sole judge of the *latter*. *Socinus's* main design (or *pretence* at least) was to bring all the mysteries of Christianity to a full accommodation with the notions of man's reason; and so far the design was, no doubt, laudible enough, had it kept within the bounds of a sober prosecution. For that which is contrary to reason, cannot be true in religion; nor can God contradict that in the book of his *revealed word*, which he has writ before in the *book of nature*: so much, I say, is certain; and cannot be denied. Nevertheless, a little reason will prove also, that many things may seem *contrary to reason*, which yet really are *not so*; and where this seeming contrariety is, the question will be, whether *revelation* ought to *controul reason*, or *reason prescribe to revelation*; which indeed is the very hinge upon which the whole *Socinian* controversy turns.

But to proceed, and show, that even *Socinianism* itself by a kind of *Antiperistasis*, took its rise from Popery, as the accidental cause of it, it is to be observed, that those nice, bold, and unjustifiable notions, which many of the schoolmen had advanced concerning the *divine essence*, (things which the mind of man can form to itself no *express idea*, nor consequently any *clear knowledge* of,) caused in *Socinus* such an high loathing of that whole scheme of christian theology, which then obtained in the world, that breaking through all, he utterly denied the divine nature of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*; and so exploded the whole doctrine of the Trinity, as no part of the christian religion: frequently alleging also, that the urging the necessity of believing notions so contrary (as he pretended) to the maxims of natural reason, mightily scandalized and kept off the *Jews, Turks*, and rational infidels, from embracing Christianity. And this consideration he laid no small stress upon.

But in answer to it: By his favour, the contrariety of the notions here excepted against to natural reason, (as confidently as it has been all along supposed by him,) was never yet proved; and as for the *offence* taken at it by *Jews* and *Turks*, he might have remembered, that the doctrines preached by *St. Paul* himself found no better acceptance; as being to the *Jews* a *stumbling-block*, and to the *Greeks* *foolishness*; but neither by him who preached it, nor by those who received it, at all the less valued for its being so. And certainly the christian church would make but an ill bargain, to barter away any one article of her faith, to gain either *Turk* or *Jew*: and I shrewdly guess, that the *Jews* themselves understood *bargaining* too well, to part with their *Moses* for a *Socinian Christ*. But farther, as touching this heresy; the time *when* it was vented in the world, is no less observable than the instruments *by whom*: Satan suiting the work he had to do, to the peculiar qualification of the age, which he was to do it in. For as the schoolmen, who were the greatest promoters of the papal interest, sacrificing both reason and religion to the support of it, were in the highest vogue for some ages before; so the age, wherein it began to decline, had entertained a general contempt of that sort of learning, as may appear out of Sir *Thomas More's* defence of *Erasmus*, and other criticks against *Dorpius*, a great patron and admirer of school-divinity. And as for *Socinus* himself, the *Polonian*, who wrote his life, testifies, *illum Scholasticam Theologiam nunquam attigisse*. Thus therefore was he qualified (it seems) to baffle the learned part of the world; and having made his first adventure in denying Christ's divinity, and bringing it much lower than ever *Arius* did, the denial of his *satisfaction* unavoidably followed; no mere creature being able, in a strict sense, to *merit of God*, and much less to *satisfy for sin*. So that we see here, how Satan, under the plausible plea of reason, introduced a doctrine into the

world, which has shook every article of our faith; and in the full compass of it, grasps in the most considerable heresies that ever were; especially those two topping ones, of *Photinianism* and *Pelagianism*. And whosoever shall, by impartial logick, spin it out to its utmost consequences, shall find, that it tends to, and inevitably ends in, the destruction of all religion; and that where *Socinianism* has laid the *premises*, *atheism* cannot be kept out of the *conclusion*. But now, that even *reason* itself is but pretended only, and not really shown in the doctrines of *Socinus*, give me leave to demonstrate in one or two instances, instead of many more, that might be assigned.

(1.) That this doctrine asserts Christ to be a mere *creature*, and yet ascribes to him *divine worship*; and that both as to *adoration* and *invocation*; and this upon *indispensable necessity*.* So that whereas *Socinus* says, that the *Jews* and *Turks* are so scandalized at our asserting Christ's Deity, I am sure, that by a better grounded aversion, they are more scandalized at idolatry. And if *Socinus* will advance this proposition, that Jesus Christ is not by nature God, let *Jews*, *Turks*, and all infidels of common sense alone to make the assumption; *that then he is not to be worshipped with divine worship*. *Christianus Francken* shamefully baffled *Socinus* upon this head. And it is impossible for him, or any of his tribe, to maintain it. But,

(2.) This doctrine asserts also, *that God cannot certainly foreknow future contingents*; as *Socinus* positively concludes in the eleventh chapter of his *Prelections*; where, in answering, or rather eluding such scriptures, as declare the contrary, he all along with a bold impiety degrades the divine knowledge into mere

* See *Socinus* in his catechism, discoursing of those, who allow not of the adoration and invocation of Christ. *Quid censes de iis, qui ista Christo non tribuunt?* To which he answers: *Censeo illos non esse Christianos; quippe qui revera Christum non habeant; et Jesum esse Christum licet fortasse aperte verbis non audeant, re tamen ipsâ omnino negent.* And elsewhere; *Præstat trinitarium esse, quàm asserere Christum non esse adorandum.*

conjecture, and no more ; and so ranges the all-knowing God with the heathen *oracles*, *soothsayers*, and *astrologers*, not allowing him any pre-eminence above them, but only a better *faculty at guessing* than they had : Which, amongst all other wretched consequences, must needs render God such a governor of the world, as, in those many important affairs of it, depending upon the free motions of man's will, shall not be able to tell certainly, what shall come to pass in it, so much as one day before it actually happens. He may indeed (as I showed before) shrewdly guess at events, (and so may a wise man too,) but farther than guessing he cannot go. All which are such monstrous assertions, and so scandalously contumelious to the divine nature and attributes, and yet so inevitably resulting from the position first laid down by him, that nothing can equal the profaneness of them, but the absurdities.

As for several others of the *Socinian* errors ; to wit, about the nature of the *sacraments*, the *divine covenants*, the *ministry*, and the *church*, with sundry other parts of divinity, I purposely omit them ; and mention only these *two*, as being in themselves not grosser errors in divinity, than inconsistencies in philosophy. So that upon this turn at least, we may worthily use that remark of *Grotius*, in his book concerning the satisfaction of Christ ; *Mirum esse, toties à Socino ostentari rectam rationem, ostendi nusquam.*

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And thus much for the *first extreme* mentioned ; by which Satan has poisoned the principles and *theoretic* part of religion ; though the poison will be found of that spreading malignity, as to influence the *practic* too. And so we come to

2. The *Second extreme* mentioned ; under which, as an *angel of light*, he more directly strikes at the practice of religion ; and that is *Enthusiasm* : a thing not more detestable in its effects, than plausible in its occasion. For men being enraged at the magisterial imposing

of *traditions* upon them, as a rule of faith equal to the *written word*; and being commanded withal, to submit their reason to the cheat of an *infallible interpreter*, they too naturally struck off to his extreme, to slight the judgment of *all antiquity*, and to adhere only to the bare letter of the scripture; and then both to secure and authorize their errors, they made their own *reason*, or rather humour, (first surnaming it the *Spirit*,) the infallible, unappealing judge of all that was delivered in the *written word*. And now, upon these terms, what could keep a man so disposed from coming over to *Socinianism*; since the prime engine made use of by *Socinus* himself, for the venting of all his abominations, was a professed defiance of the judgment of all *antiquity*, in matters of *religion*? And what likewise could hinder a man (if his temper inclined that way) from taking up in *Anabaptism*, when he could neither find any clear *precept* for infant-baptism, nor express *instance* of it in the scripture; but only probable inferences from thence, and remote consequences; all of them perhaps too little, without the universal tradition of the church, to found the necessity and perpetuity of such a practice upon? Especially having been encountered by such specious objections, as have been too often produced against it. And thus we see, how both the two forementioned extremes commence upon one and the same principle; to wit, the *laying aside the judgment of antiquity*, both in matters of *faith*, and in all expositions of scripture; but *Socinianism* being (as was observed) an heresy much too fine for the gross and thick genius of vulgar capacities, the devil found it requisite sometimes to change his engine, and amongst such as these, to set up his standard in *Familism* or *Enthusiasm*: a monster, from whose teeming womb have issued some of the vilest, the foulest, and most absurd practices and opinions, that the nature of man (as corrupt as it is) was ever poisoned and polluted with. For these enthusiasts, having first

brought all to the *naked letter of scripture*, and then confined that letter wholly to the exposition of *the Spirit*, (as they called it,) they proceed farther, and advance this *mystery of iniquity* to its highest *ἀκμή*, by asserting the immediate *indwelling* of the *Spirit* in their persons; so that by his impulse they may, like *Abraham*, *Phinehas*, or *Ehud*, be carried out to actions in other men, indeed unlawful, but in themselves sufficiently warranted by the *Spirit's* dispensing with his own *laws* in their behalf, and much more with the laws of men; besides that, according to the same doctrine, he only, who has this Spirit, can be a competent judge of what is suggested to him by it; a principle of that diabolical malignity, that it sets men beyond all reach of the magistrate, and frets asunder the very nerves of all government and society. For it owns an impulse lawful, and yet unaccountable; whereby they are empowered to shake off laws, invade the rights and properties of all, and, if they please, to judge, sentence, and put to death, kings; *because the spiritual man* (forsooth) *judgeth all things, but himself is judged of none*. And these were the persons who would needs set up for the *new lights* of this last age; blazing comets always portending, or rather causing wars and confusions both in church and state; first setting all on fire, and then shining by the flames they raised. But *light* (as we have seen) being so often made the devil's *livery*, no wonder if his *servants* affect to be seen in it.

And now, after this short view of *Poper*y and *Enthusiasm*, I hope I shall not incur the suspicion of any bias to the former, if (as bad as it is) I prefer it to the latter, and allow it the poor commendation of being *the less evil of the two*. I confess, that, under both, the great enemy of truth strikes at our church and state; and that whether he acts by the fanatic *illuminati*, or by *Vaux's* *lanthorn*, the mischief projected by him is the same; there being in both *a light* (and

something else) *within*, for the blowing up of churches, and kingdoms too. Nevertheless, if we consider and compare these two extremes together, we shall find enthusiasm the more untractable and pernicious of the two, and that in a double respect.

1. That the evils of Popery are really the same in Enthusiasm. And 2. That the little good which is in Popery, is not in this.

And 1. That the evils of both are equal, may appear upon these two accounts.

(1.) That the enthusiasts challenge the same infallibility, which the papal church does, but are more intolerable in their claim; for popery places it only in one person, the pope; but enthusiasm claims it, as belonging to every Christian amongst them.

So that upon a full estimate of the matter, the papacy is only enthusiasm *contracted*, and enthusiasm the papacy *diffused*; the evil is the same in both, with the advantage of multiplication in the latter. But

(2.) Both of them equally take men off from the scriptures, and supplant their authority. For as one does it by traditions, making them equal to the *written word*; so the other does it by pretending the immediate guidance of the *Spirit*, without the rule of the said word. For see, with what contempt the father of the Familists, *Henry Nicholas*, casts off the use and authority of it. See also the *Quakers*, (who may pass for the very elixir, the *ultimum quod sit*, and hitherto the highest form of enthusiasts amongst us.) See, I say, how they recur only to the *light within them*; a broad hint to men of sense and experience, how they intend to dispose of the *scriptures*, when the *angel of this light within them* shall think fit to screw them up to an higher dispensation; for then, no doubt, they will judge it convenient, to *bury this dead letter out of their sight*. But

2. That the little good which is in Popery, is not in Enthusiasm, will appear upon these grounds.

(1.) Upon a political account. The design of the popish religion is, in the several parts and circumstances of it, to reach and accommodate itself, as much as possible, to all the humours of men : And I know no argument, like this *universal compliance*, to prove it *catholic* by. So that a learned person,* in his *Europæ Speculum*, or View of the Religions of the Western church, pronounces Popery, upon a strict view of the artificial, wonderful composure of the whole frame of it, the greatest piece of practical wit, that was ever yet set on foot in the world. For to show how in a depraved sense it *becomes all things to all men* ; is any one of a pious and severely disposed mind ? There are those retirements and mortifications in this religion, which will both employ and gratify such a disposition. Or, is he, on the other side, of a loose, jolly temper ? Why, there is that sufficiency placed in the *opus operatum*, and the external acts of religion, pieced out with suitable supplies from the bank of merit, which shall make the whole practice of it easy and agreeable. And lastly, if a man has lost his estate, broke his credit, missed of his preferments, failed in his projects, or the like, he may fairly and creditably take sanctuary in some monastery, and so pretend piously to leave the world, as soon as he finds that the world is leaving him.

And as for the doctrinal part of the christian religion, *Escobar*, with his fellow *casuists*, has so pared off all the roughness of that, and suited the *strictest precepts* to the largest and *loosest consciences*, that it will be a much harder matter to prove a man a sinner, than to condemn him for his being so ; so carefully do these men step in between *sin* and *sorrow* : So that, if conscience should at any time become troublesome, and guilt begin to lift up its voice, it is but to go and disgorge all in *confession*, and then *absolution* issuing of course, eases the mind, and takes off all that anguish and de-

* Sir Edwyn Sandys.

spair, which (should it lie pent up, without vent) might overwhelm, or (as *Ovid* expresses it) even *strangle* a man, and either send him to a *halter*, or prove itself instead of one.

And thus these spiritual sinks receive and divert all those ill humours of desperate, discontented persons, (which the world will never want,) and which, in all probability, would otherwise discharge themselves upon the state. For he, who is malcontent and desperate, will assuredly either let fall his spirit, and consume himself, or keep it up, and so (as occasion serves) wreak his spite upon the public: For *spite* will be always working, and either find, or make itself an *object* to work upon. *Cain* was the only person I have read of, who sought to divert his discontent by *building cities*; but the reason was, because then there were none for him to pull down. These, I say, are some of the benefits, which the papal constitution bestows upon the civil concerns of such, as fall within its communion.

But on the contrary, where the *quicksilver*, or rather *gunpowder* of enthusiasm, (for the fifth of *November* must not claim it all,) has once insinuated itself into the veins and bowels of a kingdom, it presently rallies together all the distempers, all the humours, all the popular heats and discontents, till it kicks down crowns and sceptres, tramples upon thrones, much like those boisterous vapours shut up within the caverns of the earth, which no sooner inspire it into a *quaking fit*, (as I may express it,) but it overturns houses and towns, swallows up whole cities, and, in a word, writes its history in ruins and desolations, or in something more terrible than all, called a *farther reformation*. But,

(2.) Popery is likewise preferable to Enthusiasm, in respect of the nature, quality, and complexion of the subjects in which it dwells.

The popish religion has not been of that poisonous influence, but it has brought up men of accomplished

learning and morals, of a sublime wit, and all other excellent parts, which human nature can recommend itself by ; whereas enthusiasm, on the contrary, seldom falls upon such dispositions, but commonly takes up its abode in the gloomy regions of melancholy, of an ill habit of body, and a worse of mind ; so that the spirit of darkness, brooding upon the ill humours of the one, and the distractions of the other, commonly hatches this monster. For, to look back upon some of the most noted ringleaders of our late *disorders* in church and state, were they not such as were first under some *disorder* themselves ? Persons for the most part *cracked* either in *fortune* or in *brain*, acted by preternatural heats ; and so mistaking that for *devotion*, which was only *distemper*, and for a *good conscience*, which too often proved little else but a *bad constitution*. And in such cases certainly, we may well collect the malignity of that principle, which never dwells but in such venomous tempers, and rationally conclude, that the *leprosy* must needs have seized the *inhabitants*, where the infection sticks so close to the *walls*.

(3.) Popery is likewise much more tolerable than Enthusiasm, upon a religious account. The great basis upon which the whole body of Christianity rests, is the *divinity of Christ's person*, the *history of his life and death*, his *actions and sufferings*, and his *resurrection and ascension* concluding all. But though the popish church has presumed to make several bold additions to, and some detractions from, the old system of our faith, yet it always held sacred the foregoing articles. Whereas, on the contrary, *Familism* and *Quakerism*, the two grand and most thriving branches of enthusiasm, have reduced the whole gospel to *allegories* and *figures*, and turned the history of what Christ *actually did and suffered*, into mystical and moral significations of some virtues to be wrought within us, or some actions to be wrought by us. And this in truth does, and must directly strike at the very vitals of our religion, and with-

out more ado, will (if not prevented) effectually send Christianity packing out of the world. Popery indeed has forced some bad consequences from good principles, but this destroys the very principles themselves.

Add to this, that the corruptions in a church are not so destructive as schisms and divisions from it, the constant effects of enthusiasm. It being much in the body spiritual as in the natural; where that which severs the continuity of parts, tends more to the destruction of the whole, than that which corrupts them. You may cure a throat when it is *sore*, but not when it is *cut*.

And so I have done with this parallel; after which, give me leave to recapitulate to you, in short, some of Satan's principal and most specious abuses of religion, discoursed of by us. As first, how he made use of the church's abhorrence of *Polytheism*, for the introduction of *Arianism*, in the denial of our Saviour's divinity; and next, how upon the fall of that heresy, he took occasion, from the zealous adoration of Christ's person, to bring in a superstitious worship of the virgin *Mary*, his mother, and of his picture in crucifixes, and the like; and so at length appeared in popery a sort of religion, making men in nothing more zealous, than in worshipping such things. And lastly, how, when this also was shaken off, with the tales and legends that chiefly supported it, and the bare scripture, with the guidance of the Spirit, made the sole *rule of faith*, he then in the greater and more refined wits turned *Socinian*, and in the vulgar played the *enthusiast*. And thus, having pursued the impostor through all his labyrinths, pulled off his vizard, and turned his *inside* outwards; that we may now, by reflecting upon what is past, the better fence *against his methods* for the future,

III. I shall here proceed to the last *general head* proposed; and under it very briefly set down some principles, by which he is likely enough to play over

his old game again, and, if not counterworked, to trump up the same religious cheats upon the world with more advantage than before. And these are eminently three.

1. The stating of the doctrine of *faith* and *free grace* so, as to make them undermine the necessity of a good life. God's mercy is indeed the crown of all his attributes, and his grace the emanation of his mercy; and whosoever goes about in the least to derogate from it, may he (for me) find no share in it. But, after all, has not the devil endeavoured to supplant the gospel in a considerable part of it, by the very plea of grace? while some place an irreconcilable opposition, between the efficacy of that, and all freedom of man's will; and thereby make those things inconsistent, which the admirable wisdom of God had made so fairly subordinate. But notwithstanding such fancies, we shall find that religion, in the true nature of it, consists of *action*, as well as *notion*; and that he believes to very little purpose, whose *life* is not the better for *his belief*.

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2. A second principle, by which in all likelihood the devil may impose upon the church, is by opposing the *power of godliness* irreconcilably to *all forms*. And what is this, but in another instance to confront subordinates, and to destroy the body, because the soul can subsist without it? But thus to sequester the divine worship from all external assistances, that by this means (forsooth) it may become *all spirit*, is no doubt, a notable fetch of the devil, who, we know, is *all spirit* himself, but never the less a devil for being so. On the contrary, we have rather cause to fear, that in the strength of this pretence, the worship of Christ may be treated as Christ himself once was; that is, first be *stripped*, and then *crucified*. For would you know what the devil drives at, in all this seemingly seraphic plea? Why, first he pleads, that a set *service*,

or *liturgy*, for divine worship, is *superstition* and *formality*; and then, that *churches* and a *ministry* are so too. And lastly, that the very letter of the scripture is but a mere form, (if so much,) and accordingly to be laid aside, as in *Familism* and *Quakerism*, we have shown, it actually is.

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3. The last principle I shall mention, whereby Satan has so much abused the world, and may (for aught appears to the contrary) do so again, is the ascribing such a kingdom to Christ, as shall interfere with the governments of the world. * * * * And if this be the grand charter of Christ's kingdom, and the execution thereof be committed wholly to a sort of ecclesiastics, (and those made such by none but themselves,) it will in good earnest behove kings and princes to turn their *thrones* into *stools of repentance*; for, upon these terms, I know not, where else they can expect to sit safe. As for the late troubles caused in these poor kingdoms by the same rebellious ferment, and carried on much more by *black-coats*, than by *red*, we shall find, that they all moved by the spring of a few, specious, abused words; such as the *spirit*, *christian liberty*, the *power of godliness*, the *sceptre and kingdom of Jesus Christ*, and the like. Touching which, it will be found no such strange or new thing for Satan to teach *rebellion*, as well as to manage a *temptation*, in *scripture-phrase*. He can trapan a *Jephtha* into a *vow* and *solemn oath*, and then bind him, under fear of perjury, to perform it by an horrid and inhuman murder. And in a word, by a bold and shameless pretence of God's *cause*, he can baffle and break through any of his commands.

And thus, at length, I have upon the matter despatched what I had to say upon this subject; a subject of such vast importance, that it would be but to upbraid any hearer, to enforce it by any farther argument than itself. For can we have an higher con-

cern at stake, than our happiness in both worlds, or a subtler gamester to win it from us, than he who understands his game so perfectly well, that though he *stakes nothing*, yet never *plays* for less than *all*, in any of his temptations? which being our case, should not he who is so wise, as to see the danger he is in, be so wise also, as not to cast the least pleasing glance upon any of his insidious offers? especially in their first addresses, when they paint and flatter most; considering that nothing ever flatters, but what is false; nor paints, but what, without it, would appear exceedingly ugly. There cannot certainly be a greater reproach to an intelligent being, than to barter away glory and immortality for baubles, to lose *paradise* for an *apple*, to damn one's soul to please one's palate; and in a word, to be tempted with such proposals, as the proposer himself shall extremely scorn and laugh at us for accepting. For what is all this, but the height of mockery, as well as misery, the very *sting of death*, and like being *murdered* (as the best of kings was) by a *disguised executioner*? For such an one the tempter ever was; never accosting us with a *smile*, but he designs us a *stab*; nor on the other hand ever *frightening* those, whom he would *destroy*. Such a course, he well knows, will not do his work; but that, if he would ruin a man effectually, *silence* and *suddenness* are his surest ways; and he must take heed of giving an alarm, where he intends a surprize. No; we may be sure that he understands the arts of tempting too well, not to know, that the less he appears, the more he is like to do, and that the tempter himself is no *temptation*. He is, indeed, an old, thorough-paced sophister, and has ways to make the very natures and properties of things equivocate. He can, if need be, shroud a glutton in a *fast*, and a miser in a *feast*; and though the very nature of *swine* hurries them into the foulest dirt and mire, yet to serve a turn, we read, he can make them run as violently into the *water*.

Still his way is to amuse the world with shows and shadows, surface and outside; and thereby to make good that old maxim in philosophy, that in all that occurs to the eye, it is not *substance*, but only *colour* and *figure*, which we see. This has been his practice from the very infancy and non-age of the world to this day; but whatsoever it was then in those early times, shall we, whose lot has cast us upon these latter ages, and thereby set us upon their shoulders, giving us all the advantages of warning and observations made to our hands, all the benefits of example, and of a long and various experience; shall we, I say, after all this, suffer ourselves to be fooled with the wretched, transparent artifices of modern dissimulation? with eyes turned up in prayer to God, but swelling with spite and envy towards men? with a purity above mortal pitch, professed (or rather proclaimed) in *words*, without so much as common honesty seen in *actions*? with reformation so speciously pretended, but nothing but sacrilege and rapine practised?

This was the true character of the blessed times of *Forty-one*; and one would think it a great pity, that the same cheat should pass upon the same nation twice. For nothing but the utter subversion of church and state was driven at, by Satan and his instruments, in what was then done; and *lies*, *oaths*, and armies, (raised in the strength of both,) were the means by which they effected it. In short, the nation was to be *blindfolded*, in order to its being *buffeted*; and *Sampson* to have his eyes put out, before he could be made *fool* enough to *kill* himself for company.

It is no small degree of impudence (common as it is) for men to dare, to own *pretences*, contrary to what they visibly *practise*; and yet to show, how much the world is made for the bold (as the saying is) this has been the constant course of it, with an unfailing success attending it. For as long as *knaves* will *pretend*, and *fools* believe, (as it is seldom but they keep pace

with one another) the devil's interest is sure to be served by both. And therefore, if after this long *scene* of imposture (so infinitely dishonourable to our very nature) we would effectually obviate the same for the future ; let us, in God's name, resolve once with ourselves to act as rational creatures ; that is to say, carry an open and impartial eye upon *what men do*, in spite of any thing they *shall or can say*. And next, let us, as Christians, encounter our grand enemy, the tempter, with these two best of weapons, put into our hands by the great Captain of our salvation, *watchfulness and prayer* ; and if by these blessed means, God shall lay open to us his *delusions*, we may thank ourselves, if we fall by his *temptations*.

DISCOURSE XII.

SELF-INTEREST DEPOSED.

MATTH. x. 33.

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven.

As the great comprehensive gospel-duty is the denial of self, so the grand gospel sin that confronts it, is the denial of Christ. These two are both the commanding and the dividing principles of all our actions : For whosoever acts in opposition to one, does it always in behalf of the other. None ever opposed Christ, but to gratify self : None ever renounced the interest of self, but from a prevailing love to the interest of Christ. The subject I have here pitched upon, may seem improper in these times, and in this place, where the number of professors and of men is the same ; where the cause and interest of Christ has been so cried up ; and Christ's personal reign so called for and expected. But since it has been still preached up, but acted down ; and dealt with, as the eagle in the fable did with the oyster, carrying it up on high, that by letting it fall he might dash it in pieces : I say, since Christ must reign, but his truths be made to serve, I suppose it is but reason to distinguish between profession and pretence, and to conclude, that men's present crying, *Hail, king, and bending the knee* to Christ, are only in order to his future crucifixion.

For the discovery of the sense of the words, I shall inquire into their occasion. From the very beginning

of the chapter we have Christ consulting the propagation of the gospel ; and in order to it, (being the only way that he knew to effect it,) sending forth a *ministry* ; and giving them a commission, together with instruction for the execution of it. He would have them fully acquainted with the nature and extent of their office ; and so he joins commission with instruction ; by one he conveys power, by the other knowledge. Supposing (I conceive) that upon such an undertaking, the more *learned* his ministers were, they would prove never the less *faithful*.* And thus having fitted them, and stript them of all manner of defence, *he sends them forth amongst wolves* : a hard expedition, you will say, to go amongst wolves ; but yet much harder to convert them into sheep ; and no less hard even to discern some of them, possibly being under sheep's clothing ; and so by the advantage of that dress, sooner felt than discovered : Probably also such as had both the properties of wolves, that is, they could whine and howl, as well as bite and devour. But, that they might not go altogether naked among their enemies, the only armour that Christ allows them, is prudence and innocence ; *Be ye wise as serpents, but harmless as doves* : weapons not at all offensive, yet most suitable to their warfare, whose greatest encounters were to be exhortations, and whose only conquest, escape. Innocence is the best caution, and we may unite the expression, to be *wise as a serpent*, is to be *harmless as a dove*. Innocence is like polished armour ; it adorns and it defends. In sum, he tell them, that the opposition they should meet with, was the greatest imaginable. But he promises them an equal proportion of assistance ; and, as if it were not of force enough to out-weigh the forementioned discouragements, he casts into the balance the promise of a reward to such as should execute, and of punishment

* In the parliament of 1653, it being put to the vote, whether they should support and encourage a *godly* and *learned* ministry, the latter word was rejected, and the vote passed for a *godly* and *faithful* ministry.

to such as should neglect their commission : The reward in the former verse, *Whosoever shall confess me before men*, &c. the punishment in this, *But whosoever shall deny*, &c. As if by way of pre-occupation, he should have said, Well, here you see your commission ; this is your duty, these your discouragements : Never seek for shifts and evasions from worldly afflictions ; this is your reward, if you perform it ; this is your doom, if you decline it.

As for the explication of the words, they are clear and easy ; and their originals in the Greek are of single signification, without any ambiguity ; and therefore I shall not trouble you, by proposing how they run in this or that edition ; or straining for an interpretation where there is no difficulty, or distinction where there is no difference.

* * * * *

From the words we may deduce these observations :

1. *We shall find strong motives and temptations from men, to draw us to a denial of Christ.* 2. *No terrors, or solicitations from men, though never so great, can warrant or excuse such a denial.* 3. *To deny Christ's words, is to deny Christ.*

But since these observations are rather implied, than expressed in the words, I shall wave them, and instead of deducing a doctrine distinct from the words, prosecute the words themselves under this doctrinal paraphrase : *Whosoever shall deny, disown, or be ashamed of either the person or truths of Jesus Christ, for any fear or favour of man, shall with shame be disowned, and eternally rejected by him at the dreadful judgment of the great day.*

The discussion of this shall lie in these things. To show,

I. How many ways Christ and his truths may be denied. II. What are the causes that induce men to a denial of Christ and his truths. III. How far a man may consult his safety in time of persecution,

without denying Christ. IV. What is imported in Christ's denying us before his Father in heaven. V. To apply all to the present occasion.

But before I enter upon these, I must briefly premise this; that though the text and the doctrine run peremptory and absolute, *Whosoever denies Christ, shall assuredly be denied by him*; yet still there is a *tacit* condition in the words supposed, unless repentance intervene. God in mercy has so tempered his word, that we have, for the most part, a reserve of mercy wrapped up in a curse. And the very first judgment that was pronounced upon fallen man, was with the allay of a promise. This premised, I come now

I. To the first thing, *viz.* How many ways Christ and his truths may be denied, &c. Here first, in general, I assert, that we may deny him in all those acts that are capable of being morally good or evil; those are the proper scene in which we act our confessions or denials of him. Accordingly, therefore, all ways of denying Christ, I shall comprise under these three.

1. We may deny him and his truths by an heretical judgment. I know it is doubted whether a bare error in judgment can condemn: but since truths, absolutely necessary to salvation, are so clearly revealed, that we cannot err in them, unless notoriously wanting to ourselves; herein the fault of the judgment is resolved into a precedent default in the will; and so the case is put out of doubt. But here it may be replied, Are not truths of fundamental necessity, very disputable; as the Deity of Christ, the trinity of persons; if they are not in themselves disputable, why are they so much disputed? Indeed, I believe, if we trace these disputes to their original cause, we shall find, that they never sprung from a reluctancy in reason to embrace them. For this reason itself dictates, as most rational, to assent to any thing, though seemingly contrary to reason, if it is revealed by God, and we are certain of the revelation. These two supposed, these

disputes must needs arise only from curiosity and singularity; and these are faults of a diseased will.

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But yet more fully to state the matter, how far a denial of Christ in belief and judgment, is damnable: We will propose the question, whether those who hold the fundamentals of faith may deny Christ damnably, in respect of those superstructures, and consequences that arise from them? I answer in brief, by fundamental truths are understood, (1.) Either such, without the belief of which we cannot be saved: Or, (2.) Such, the belief of which is sufficient to save: If the question be proposed of fundamentals in this latter sense, it contains its own answer; for where a man believes those truths, the belief of which is sufficient to save, there the disbelief or denial of their consequences cannot condemn. But what, and how many these fundamentals are, it will then be agreed upon, when all sects, opinions, and persuasions do unite and consent. If we speak of fundamentals in the former sense, as they are only truths, without which we cannot be saved, it is manifest that we may believe them, and yet be damned for denying their consequences: For that which is only a condition, without which we cannot be saved, is not therefore a cause sufficient to save: Much more is required to the latter, than to the former. I conclude therefore, that to deny Christ in our judgment, will condemn, and this concerns the learned: Christ demands the homage of your understanding: He will have your *reason* bend to him; you must put your heads under his feet. And we know, that heretofore, he who had the leprosy in this part, was to be pronounced utterly unclean. A poisoned reason, an infected judgment is Christ's greatest enemy. And an error in the judgment, is like an imposthume in the head, which is always noisome, and frequently mortal.

2. We may deny Christ by oral expressions. Now our words are the interpreters of our hearts, the tran-

script of the judgment, with some farther addition of good or evil. He that interprets, usually enlarges. What our judgment whispers in secret, these proclaim upon the house-top. To deny Christ in the former, imports enmity ; but in these, open defiance. Christ's passion is renewed in both : He that mis-judges of him, condemns him ; but he that blasphemes him, spits in his face. Thus the *Jews* and the *Pharisees* denied Christ. *We know that this man is a sinner*, John ix, 24. *And a deceiver*, Matt. xxvii, 63. *And he casts out devils by the prince of devils*, Matt. xii, 24. And thus Christ is daily denied, in many blasphemies printed and divulged, and many horrid opinions vented against the truth. The schools dispute, whether in morals the external action superadds any thing of good or evil to the internal elicit act of the will : But certainly the enmity of our judgments is wrought up to an high pitch, before it rages in an open denial. And it is a sign that it is grown too big for the heart, when it seeks for vent in our words. Blasphemy uttered, is error heightened with impudence : It is sin scorning a concealment, not only committed but defended. * * *

3. We may deny Christ in our actions and practice ; and these speak much louder than our tongues. To have an orthodox belief, and a true profession, concurring with a bad life, is only to deny Christ with a greater solemnity. Belief and profession will speak thee a Christian but very faintly, when thy conversation proclaims thee an infidel. Many, while they have preached Christ in their sermons, have read a lecture of atheism in their practice. We have many here who speak of godliness, mortification, and self-denial ; but if these are so, what means the bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen, the noise of their ordinary sins, and the cry of their great ones ? If godly, why do they wallow in all the carnalities of the world, under pretence of Christian liberty ? Why do they make religion ridiculous by pretending to prophe-

cy, and when their prophecies prove delusions, why do they blaspheme? * If such are self-deniers, what means the griping, the prejudice, the covetousness, and the pluralities preached against, and retained, and the arbitrary government of many? When such men preach of self-denial and humility, I cannot but think of *Seneca*, who praised poverty, and that very safely, in the midst of his riches and gardens; and even exhorted the world to throw away their gold, perhaps (as one well conjectures) that he might gather it up: So these desire men to be humble, that they may domineer without opposition. But it is an easy matter to commend patience, when there is no danger of any trial, to extol humility in the midst of honours, to *begin a fast after dinner*.† But, O how Christ will deal with such persons, when he shall draw forth all their actions bare and stripped from this deceiving veil of their heavenly speeches! He will then say, It was not your sad countenance, nor your hypocritical groaning, by which you did either confess or honour me: but your worldliness, your luxury, your sinister partial dealing: these have denied me, these have wounded me, these have gone to my heart; these have caused the weak to stumble, and the profane to blaspheme. You have indeed spoke me fair, you have saluted me with your lips, but even then you betrayed me. Depart from me therefore, ye professors of holiness, but workers of iniquity.

* * * * *

Pass we now to show,

II. What are the causes inducing men to deny Christ in his truths. I shall propose three.

* A noted Independent divine, when *Oliver Cromwell* was sick, declared that God had revealed to him that he should recover and live thirty years longer, for that God had raised him up for a work which could not be done in less time. But *Oliver's* death being published two days after, the said divine publicly in prayer expostulated with God the defeat of his prophecy, in these words: *Lord, thou hast lied unto us; yea, thou hast lied unto us.*

† Very credibly reported to have been done in an Independent congregation at *Oxford*.

1. The seeming supposed absurdity of many truths : Upon this foundation heresy always builds. It is easy to draw it forth and demonstrate, how upon this score the chief heresies, that now are said to trouble the church, do oppose and deny the most important truths in divinity. As first, hear the denier of the Deity, and satisfaction of Christ. What (says he), can the same person be God and man, the creature and the Creator? Can we ascribe such attributes to the same thing, whereof one implies a negation? And when we distinguish between the person and the nature; was not that distinction an invention of the schools, savoring rather of metaphysics, than divinity? Then for his satisfaction, they will demand to whom this satisfaction is paid? If to God, then God pays a price to himself: And what is it else to require and need no satisfaction, than for one to satisfy himself? Next comes in the denier of the decrees and free grace of God. What (says he), shall we exhort, admonish, and intreat the saints to beware of the falling away finally, and at the same time assert, that it is impossible for them so to fall? Then for justification. How are you justified by an imputed righteousness? Is it yours before it is imputed, or not? If not, (as we must say) is this to be justified, to have that accounted yours, that is not yours? But again, did you ever hear of any man made rich or wise by imputation? Why then, righteous or just? Now these seeming paradoxes, attending gospel truths, cause men of weak, prejudiced intellectuals to deny them, and in them, Christ; being ashamed to own faith so much (as they think) to the disparagement of their reason.

2. The second thing causing men to deny the truths of Christ, is their unprofitableness. And no wonder, if here men forsake the truth, and assert interest. To be *pious* is the way to be *poor*. Truth still gives its followers its own badge and livery, a despised nakedness. It is hard to maintain the truth, but much harder

to be maintained by it : Could it ever yet cloath, or defend its assertors ? Did ever any man quench his thirst, or satisfy his hunger with a notion ? The testimony of *Brutus* concerning virtue, is the apprehension of most, concerning truth : That it is a name, but *lives* and *estates* are things, and therefore not to be thrown away upon words. That we are neither to worship or cringe to any thing under the Deity, is a truth too strict for a *Naaman*. He can be content to worship the true God, but then it must be in the house of *Rimmon*. The reason was implied in his condition, he was Captain of the host, and therefore he thought it reason good to bow to *Rimmon*, rather than endanger his place : Better bow than break. Indeed sometimes Providence casts things so, that truth and interest lie the same way : And, when it is wrapt up in this covering, men can be content to follow it, to press hard after it, but it is, as we pursue some beasts, only for their skins : Take off the covering, and though men obtain the truth, they would lament the loss of that : As *Jacob* wept and mourned over the torn coat, when *Joseph* was alive. It is incredible to consider how interest out-weighs truth. If a thing in itself be doubtful, let it make for interest, and it shall be raised at least into probable ; and if a truth be certain, and thwart interest, it will quickly fetch it down to but a probability : Nay, if it does not carry with it an impregnable evidence, it will go near to debase it to a downright falsity. How much interest casts the balance in cases dubious, I could give sundry instances : Let one suffice : And that concerning the unlawfulness of usury. Most of the learned men in the world successively, both heathen and Christian, do assert the taking of usury to be utterly unlawful ; yet the divines of the reformed church beyond the seas, though most rigid in other things, do generally affirm it to be lawful. That the case may be disputed with plausible arguments on either side, we may well grant : But what then is the

reason, that makes these divines so unanimously concur in this opinion? Indeed I shall not affirm this to be the reason, but it may seem so to many: That they receive their salaries by way of pension, in present ready money, and so have no other way to improve them; so that it may be suspected, that the change of their salary, would be the strongest argument to change their opinion. The truth is, interest is the grand wheel and spring that moves the universe. Let Christ and truth say what they will, if interest will have it, gain must be godliness: If enthusiasm is in request, learning must be inconsistent with grace. If pay grows short, the university maintenance must be too great. Rather than *Pilate* will be counted *Cæsar's* enemy, he will pronounce Christ innocent one hour, and condemn him the next. How Christ is made to truckle under the world, and how his truths are shuffled with for profit and pelf, the clearest proof would be by induction and example. But as it is the most clear, so here it would be the most displeasing: Wherefore I shall pass this over, since the world is now so peccant upon this account, that I am afraid *instances* would be mistaken for *invectives*.

3. The third cause inducing men to deny Christ in his truths, is their apparent danger. To confess Christ, is the ready way to be cast out of the synagogue. The church is a place of graves, as well as of worship and profession. To be resolute in a good cause, is to bring upon ourselves the punishments due to a bad. Truth indeed is a possession of the highest value, and therefore it must needs expose the owner to much danger. Christ is sometimes pleased to make the profession of himself costly, and a man cannot buy the truth, but he must pay down his life and his dearest blood for it. Christianity marks a man out for destruction; and Christ sometimes chalks out such a way to salvation, as shall verify his own saying, *He that will save his life, shall lose it.* The first ages of the church had a

more abundant experience of this: What *Paul* and the rest planted by their preaching, they watered with their blood. We know their usage was such, as Christ foretold; he sent them to wolves, and the common course then was *Christianos ad leones*. For a man to give his name to Christianity in those days, was to list himself a martyr, and to bid farewell not only to the pleasures, but also to the hopes of this life. Neither was it a single death only that then attended this profession, but the terror and sharpness of it was redoubled in the manner and circumstance. They had persecutors, whose invention was as great as their cruelty. Wit and malice conspired to find out such tortures, such deaths, that only the manner of dying was the punishment, death itself the deliverance. To be a martyr, signifies only to witness the truth of Christ, but the witnessing of the truth was then so generally attended with this event, that *martyrdom* now signifies not only to witness, but to witness by death; the word, besides its own signification, importing their practice. And since Christians have been freed from heathens, Christians themselves have turned persecutors. Since *Rome* from heathen was turned christian, it has improved its persecution into an inquisition. Now when Christ and truth are upon these terms, that men cannot confess him, but upon pain of death, the reason of their apostacy is clear; men will be wise, and leave truth and misery to such as love it; they are resolved to be cunning, let others run the hazard of being sincere. If they must be good at so high a rate, they know they may be safe at a cheaper. *Si negare sufficiat, quis erit nocens?* If to deny Christ will save them, the truth shall never make them guilty. Let Christ and his flock lie open, and exposed to all weather of persecution, foxes will be sure to have holes. And if it comes to this, that they must either renounce their religion, or forfeit their lives to the fire or the sword, it is but inverting *Job's* wife's advice, *Curse God, and live*.

III. We proceed now to show, how far a man may consult his safety, &c.

This he may do two ways.

1. By withdrawing his person. Martyrdom is an heroic act of faith. An achievement beyond an ordinary pitch of it ; to you, says the *Spirit*, *it is given to suffer*. It is a peculiar, additional gift. Let every man thoroughly consult the temper of his faith, and weigh his courage with his fears, and take the measure of both ; and if his spirit faints, if his heart mis-gives and melts at the very thoughts of the fire, let him fly and secure his own soul, and Christ's honour. *Non negat Christum fugiendo, qui ideo fugit ne neget* : He does not deny Christ by flying, who therefore flies that he may not deny him. Nay, he does not so much decline, as rather change his martyrdom : He flies from the flame, but repairs to a desert ; to poverty and hunger in a wilderness. Whereas, if he would dispense with his conscience, and deny his Lord, or swallow down two or three contradictory oaths, he should neither fear the one, nor be forced to the other.

2. By concealing his judgment. A man sometimes is no more bound to speak, than to destroy himself ; and as nature abhors this, so religion does not command that. In the times of the primitive church, when the Christians dwelt amongst heathens, it is reported of a certain maid, how she came from her father's house, to one of the tribunals of the *Gentiles*, and declared herself a Christian, spit in the Judge's face, and so provoked him to cause her to be executed. But will any say, that this was to confess Christ, or die a martyr ? He that, uncalled for, uncompelled, comes and proclaims a persecuted truth, for which he is surely to die, only dies a confessor to his own folly, and a sacrifice to his own rashness. Martyrdom is stamp'd such only by God's command ; and he that ventures upon it without a call, must endure it without a reward :

Christ will say, *Who required this at your hands?* His gospel does not dictate imprudence : No evangelical precept justles out that of a lawful self-preservation. He therefore that thus throws himself upon the sword, runs to heaven before he is sent for, where, though perhaps Christ may in mercy receive the man, yet he will be sure to disown the martyr.

And thus much concerning those lawful ways of securing ourselves in time of persecution. Not, as if these were always : For sometimes a man is bound to confess Christ openly, though he dies for it ; and to conceal a truth, is to deny it. But now, to show when it is unlawful to take these courses, by some general rule of a perpetual, never-failing truth, none ever would yet presume. For, as *Aristotle* says, *We are not to expect demonstration in ethics or politics, nor to build certain rules upon the contingency of human actions.* So, inasmuch as our flying from persecution, our confessing or concealing persecuted truths, change their very nature, according to different circumstances, we cannot limit their directions within any one universal precept : You will say then, How shall we know when to confess, when to conceal a truth ? when to wait for, when to decline persecution ? Indeed, the only way that, I think, can be prescribed in this case, is to be earnest and importunate with God in prayer for special direction : And it is not to be imagined, that he, who is both faithful and merciful, will leave a sincere soul in the dark upon such an occasion. But this I shall add, that the ministers of God are not to take refuge in any of these two forementioned ways. They are public persons ; and good shepherds must then chiefly stand close to the flock, when the wolf comes. For them to be silent in the cause of Christ, is to renounce it ; and to fly, is to desert it. As for that place urged in favour of the contrary, in v. 23: *When they persecute you in this city, flee into another,* it proves nothing ; for the precept was particular, and

concerned only the *apostles*; and that, but for that time in which they were then sent to the *Jews*, at which time Christ kept them as a reserve for the future. For when after his death they were indifferently sent both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, we find not this clause in their commission, but they were to sign the truths they preached with their blood; as we know they actually did. And moreover, when Christ bids them, being persecuted in one city, fly into another, it was not, (as *Grotius* acutely observes,) that they might lie hid, or be secure in that city, but that there they might preach the gospel: So that their flight here was not to secure their persons, but to continue their business. I conclude, therefore, that faithful ministers are to stand and endure the brunt. A common soldier may fly, when it is the duty of him that holds the standard to die upon the place. And we have abundant encouragement so to do: Christ has seconded and sweetened his command with his promise: Yea, the thing itself is not only our duty, but our glory. And he, who has done this work, has in the very work partly received his wages. And, were it put to my choice, I think I should choose rather, with spitting and scorn, to be tumbled into the dust in blood, bearing witness to any known truth of our dear Lord, now opposed by the enthusiasts of the present age, than by a denial of those truths, through blood and perjury wade to a scepter. And we need not doubt, but truth, however oppressed, will have followers, and at length prevail. A Christ, though crucified, will arise: And, as it is in the *Rev. xi. 3. The witnesses will prophesy, though it be in sackcloth.*

IV. I proceed to show, what it is for Christ to deny us before his Father in heaven. Hitherto we have treated of men's carriage to Christ in this world; now we will describe his carriage to them in the other. These words clearly relate to the last judgment; and they are a summary description of his proceeding with men at that day.

And here we will consider, 1. The action itself, *He will deny them.* 2. The circumstance of the action, *He will deny them before his Father and the holy angels.*

1. Christ's denying us is otherwise expressed (*Luke*, xiii. 27.) *I know you not.* To know, in scripture language, is to approve; and so, not to know, is to reject and condemn. Now, who knows how many woes are crowded into this one sentence, *I will deny him?* It is (to say no more) a compendious expression of hell, an eternity of torments comprised in a word: It is condemnation itself, and, what is most of all, condemnation from the mouth of a Saviour. O! the inexpressible horror that will seize upon a poor sinner, when he stands arraigned at the bar of divine justice! When he shall look about and see his accuser, his Judge, the witnesses, all of them his remorseless adversaries; the law impleading mercy, and the gospel upbraiding him, the devil, his grand accuser, drawing his indictment; numbering his sins with the greatest exactness, and aggravating them with the cruellest bitterness; and conscience, like a thousand witnesses, attesting every article, flying in his face, and rending his very heart: And then after all, Christ, from whom only mercy could be expected, owning the accusation. It will be hell enough to hear the sentence; the very promulgation of the punishment will be part of the punishment, and anticipate the execution. If *Peter* was so abashed when Christ gave him a look after his denial; if there was so much dread in his looks when he stood as prisoner, how much greater will it be when he sits as a judge? If it was so fearful when he looked his denier into repentance, what will it be when he shall look him into destruction? Believe it, when we shall hear an accusation from an Advocate, our eternal doom from our Intercessor, it will convince us that a denial of Christ is something more than a few transitory words: What trembling, what outcries,

will there be upon the pronouncing this sentence! Every word will come upon the sinner, like an arrow striking through his reins; like thunder, that is heard, and consumes at the same instant. Yea, it will be a denial with scorn, with taunting exprobrations; and to be miserable without commiseration, is the height of misery. He that falls below pity, can fall no lower. Could I give you a lively representation of guilt and horror on this hand, and decipher eternal vengeance on the other, then might I show you the condition of a sinner hearing himself denied by Christ: And for those, whom Christ has denied, it will be in vain to appeal to the Father, unless we can imagine that those, whom mercy has condemned, justice will absolve.

2. For the circumstance: *He will deny us before his Father and the holy angels.* As much as God is more glorious than man, so much is it more glorious to be confessed before him, than before men: And so much glory as there is in being confessed, so much dishonour there is in being denied. If there could be any room for comfort after the sentence of damnation, it would be this, to be executed in secret, to perish unobserved. As it is some allay to the infamy of him who died ignominiously, to be buried privately. But when a man's folly must be spread open before the angels, and all his baseness ript up before those pure spirits, this will be a double hell: to be thrust into utter darkness, only to be punished by it, without the benefit of being concealed. When Christ shall compare himself, who was denied, and the thing for which he was denied, together, and parallel his merits with a lust, and lay eternity in the balance with a trifle, then the folly of the sinner's choice shall be the greatest sting of his destruction. For a man shall not have the advantage of his former ignorance and error, to approve his sin. Things that appeared amiable by the light of this world, will appear of a different odious hue in the clear discoveries of the next: As that which

appears to be of this colour by a dim candle, will be found to be of another, looked upon in the day. So when Christ shall have cleared up men's apprehensions about the value of things, he will propose that worthy prize for which he was denied. He will hold it up to open view, and call upon men and angels: Behold, look, here's the thing, here's that piece of dirt, that windy applause, that poor transitory pleasure, that contemptible danger, for which I was *dishonoured*, my truth disowned, and for which, life, eternity, and God himself was scorned and trampled upon by this sinner: Judge all the world, whether what he so despised in the other life, he deserves to enjoy in this? How will the condemned sinner then crawl forth, and appear in his filth and shame, before that undefiled tribunal, like a toad or a snake in a king's presence chamber? Nothing so irksome, as to have one's folly displayed before the prudent; one's impurity before the pure. And all this, before that company surrounding him, from which he is neither able to look off, nor yet to look upon. A disgrace put upon a man in company is unsupportable: It is heightened according to the greatness, and multiplied according to the number of the persons that hear it. And now, as this circumstance [*before his Father*] fully speaks the *shame*, so likewise it speaks the *danger* of Christ's then denying us. For when the accusation is heard, and the person stands convict, God is immediately lifting up his hand to inflict the eternal blow; and when Christ denies to exhibit a ransom to step between the stroke then coming and the sinner, it must inevitably fall upon him, and sink his guilty soul into that deep and bottomless gulph of endless perdition. This therefore is the sum of Christ's denying us before his Father, *viz.* unsupportable shame, unavoidable destruction.

V. I proceed now to the uses which may be drawn from the truths delivered. And,

1. (Right honourable) not only the present occasion,

but even the words themselves seem eminently to address an exhortation to your honours. As for others not to deny Christ, is openly to profess him; so for you, who are invested with authority, not to deny him, is to defend him. Know therefore, that Christ does not only desire, but demand your defence, and that in a double respect; (1.) In respect of his truth. (2.) Of his members.

(1.) He requires, that you should defend and confess him in his truth. Heresy is a tare sometimes not to be pulled up but by the civil magistrate. The word *liberty of conscience* is much abused for the defence of it, because not well understood. Every man may have liberty of conscience to judge as he pleases, but not to vent what he pleases. The reason is, because conscience bounding itself within the thoughts, is of private concernment, and the cognizance of these belongs only to God: But when an opinion is published, it concerns all that hear it, and the public being endamaged by it, it becomes punishable by the magistrate, to whom the care of the public is intrusted. But there is one truth that concerns both ministry and magistracy, and all; which is opposed by those who affirm, that *none ought to govern upon the earth, but Christ in person*: Absurdly! as if the powers that are, destroyed his; as if a deputy were not consistent with a king; as if there were any opposition in subordination. They affirm also, that the wicked have no right to their estates; but only the *faithful*, that is, *themselves*, ought to *possess the earth*. I shall not be so urgent, to press you to confess Christ, by asserting and owning the truth, contrary to this, since it does not only oppose truth, but property; and here to deny Christ, would be to deny yourselves in a sense, which none is like to do.

(2.) Christ requires you to own and defend him in his members; and amongst these, the chief of them, and such as most fall in your way, the *ministers*; I

say, that despised, abject, oppressed sort of men, the *ministers*, whom the world would make anti-christian, and so deprive them of heaven ; and also strip them of that poor remainder of their maintenance, and so allow them no portion upon the earth. You may now spare that distinction of *scandalous ministers*, when it is even made *scandalous* to be a *minister*. And as for their discouragement in the courts of the law, I shall only note this, that for these many years last past, it has been the constant observation of all, that if a minister had a cause depending in the court, it was ten to one but it went against him. I cannot believe your law justles out the gospel ; but if it be thus used to undermine Christ in his servants, beware that such judgments passed upon them, do not fetch down God's judgments upon the land ; and that for such abuse of law, Christ does not in anger deprive both you and us of its use. (My lords,) I make no doubt, but you will meet with many suits in your course, in which the persons we speak of are concerned, as it is easy to prognosticate from those many worthy petitions preferred against them, for which the *well-affected petitioners** will one day receive but small thanks from the court of heaven. But however their causes speed in your tribunals, know that Christ himself will recognise them at a greater. And then, what a different face will be put upon things ! when the usurping, devouring *Nimrods* of the world shall be cast with scorn on the left hand ; and Christ himself in that great consistory shall deign to step down from his throne, and single out a poor despised minister, and openly thus confess him before his Father : Father, here is a poor servant of mine, who, for doing his duty, and testifying my truths in an hypocritical, pretending age, was wronged, trod upon, stript of all : I will, that there be now a

* Whensoever any petition was put up to the parliament in the year 1653, for the taking away of tythes, the thanks of the house were still returned to them, and that by the name and elogy of the *well-affected petitioners*.

distinction made, between such as have confessed me with the loss of the world, and those that have denied, persecuted, and insulted over me: It will be in vain then to come and creep for mercy; and say, Lord, when did we insult over thee? When did we see thee in our courts, and despised or oppressed thee? Christ's reply will be then quick and sharp: Verily, inasmuch as you did it to one of these little, poor, despised ones, ye did it unto me.

2. The second use is of information, to show us the danger as well as the baseness of a dastardly spirit, in asserting the interest and truth of Christ. Since Christ has made a christian course a warfare, of all men living a coward is the most unfit to make a Christian; whose infamy is not so great, but it is sometimes less than his peril. A coward does not always escape with disgrace, but sometimes also he loses his life: Wherefore, let all such know, as can enlarge their consciences like hell, and call any sinful compliance, submission, and a cowardly silence in Christ's cause, discretion; I say, let them know, that Christ will one day scorn them, and spit them, with their policy and prudence, into hell; and then let them consult, how politic they were, for a temporal emolument, to throw away eternity. The things which generally cause men to deny Christ, are, either the enjoyments, or the miseries of this life: But, alas! at the day of judgment all these will expire; and, as one well observes, what are we the better for pleasure, or the worse for sorrow, when it is past? But then sin and guilt will be still fresh, and heaven and hell will be then yet to begin. If ever it was seasonable to preach courage in the despised, abused cause of Christ, it is now; when his truths are reformed into nothing, when the hands and hearts of his faithful ministers are weakened, and his *worship* extirpated in a mockery, that his *honour* may be advanced. Well, to establish our hearts in duty, let us beforehand propose to ourselves the worst that can

happen. Should God in his judgment suffer *England* to be transformed into a *monster* ; should the faithful be every where massacred ; should the places of learning be demolished, and our colleges reduced (not only as one* in his zeal would have it) to *three*, but to *none* ; yet, assuredly, hell is worse than all this, and is the portion of such as deny Christ : Wherefore, let our discouragements be what they will, loss of places, of estates, of life, and relations ; yet still this sentence stands ratified in the decrees of heaven, *Cursed be that man, that for any of these shall desert the truth, and deny his Lord.*

* *U. C.* a colonel of the army, the perfidious cause of *Penruddock's* death, and some time after high sheriff of *Oxfordshire*, openly and frequently affirmed the uselessness of the *Universities*, and that *three colleges* were sufficient to answer the occasions of the nation, for the breeding of men up to learning, so far as it was either necessary or useful.

DISCOURSE XIII.

OF LOVING OUR ENEMIES.

MATTH. v. 44.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies.

* * * * *

I affirm that Christ does by no means here set himself against the law of *Moses* as a law either *faulty* or *imperfect*, and upon those accounts needing either *correction*, or *addition*, but only opposes the corrupt comments of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* upon the law, as really *contradictions to it* rather than *expositions of it*; and that for these following reasons.

First, Because the words in this sermon mentioned and opposed by Christ, are manifestly, for the most part, not the words of the law itself, but of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. As for instance, *Whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment*. And again in the next verse, *He shall be in danger of the council*. They all refer to the *Pharisees'* way of expressing themselves; which manifestly shows, that it was their doctrine and words which he was now disputing against, and not the law itself; which this is by no means the language of.

Secondly, That expression, *that it was said by those of old time*, was not uttered by *Christ* in his own person, but by way of *prosopopæia*, in the person of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, whose custom it was to preface and authorize their lectures and glosses to the people, with the pompous plea of antiquity and tradi-

tion. As if Christ had bespoken them thus: You have been accustomed indeed to hear the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* tell you, that *this* and *this* was said by *those of old time*, but notwithstanding all these pretences, I tell you that the case is much otherwise, and that the true account and sense of the law is *thus* and *thus*. This, I say, is the natural purport and meaning of our Saviour's words throughout this chapter.

Thirdly, That passage, *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Ye shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy*, is so far from being words of the *Mosaic* law, that *Moses* commands the clean contrary to the latter clause; *Exod. xxiii, 24. If thou seest thine enemy's ox going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again; and the ass of him who hateth thee, lying under his burthen, thou shalt surely help him.* And if this was the voice of the law then, can we imagine that it would make it a man's duty to relieve an enemy's ox, or his ass, and at the same time allow him to hate or malign his person? This certainly is incredible.

Fourthly, If Christ opposed his precepts to those of the *Mosaic* law, then God speaking by Christ must contradict himself as speaking by *Moses*. For whatsoever *Moses* spoke, he spoke as the immediate dictates of God, from whom he received the law. But this is absurd, and by no means consistent with the divine holiness and veracity.

Fifthly, Christ in all this discourse never calls any one of the doctrines opposed by him, the *words of Moses* or of the law, but only the *righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, which show that they, and they only, were the persons with whom he managed this whole contest.

Let this therefore rest with us as a firm conclusion; that *Moses* and *Christ* were at perfect agreement, whatever the controversy was between him and the *Pharisees*. And so from the context of the words, I

pass to the duty enjoined in them, which is *to love our enemies* : The discussion of which I shall cast under three general heads.

I. I shall show negatively what is not that *love*, which we are here commanded to show our enemies.

II. I shall show positively wherein it does consist. III. I shall produce arguments to enforce it. And,

I. What is *not* that love, which we must show our enemies. This we shall find to exclude several things which would fain wear this name.

1. As to treat an enemy with a *fair deportment and amicable language*, is not the *love* here enjoined by Christ. Love scorns to dwell any where but in the heart. The tongue is a thing made for words, but what reality is there in a voice, what substance in a sound? The kindness of the heart never kills, but that of the tongue often does. And in an ill sense a *soft answer* may sometimes *break the bones*. He who speaks me well, proves himself a rhetorician or a courtier ; but that is not to be a friend.

Was ever the hungry fed, or the naked clothed with good looks or fair speeches? These are but thin garments to keep out the cold, and but a slender repast to conjure down the rage of a craving appetite. My enemy perhaps is ready to starve through poverty, and I tell him I am heartily glad to see him, and should be *very ready to serve him*, but still my hand is close, and my purse shut ; I neither bring him to my table, nor lodge him under my roof ; he asks for bread, and I give a compliment, a thing indeed not so *hard as a stone*, but altogether as *dry*. I treat him with art and outside : And lastly at parting, with all the ceremonies of dearness, I shake him by the hand, but put nothing into it. In a word, I play with his distress, and dally with that which will not be dallied with, want, misery, and a clamorous necessity.

For will fair words and a courtly behaviour discharge scores? If they could, there is a sort of men that

would not be so much in debt as they are. Can a man look and speak himself out of his creditors' hands? Surely then, if my words cannot do this for myself, neither can they do it for my enemy. And therefore, this has nothing of the love spoken of in the text. It is but a meer mockery, for the receiving that cannot make my enemy at all the richer, the giving of which makes me not one penny the poorer. It is indeed the fashion of the world thus to amuse men with empty caresses; nay, it has this peculiar privilege above all other fashions, that it never alters; but certainly no man ever yet quenched his thirst with looking upon a golden cup, nor made a meal with the outside of a lordly dish.

But fair speeches and looks are not only very insignificant as to the real effects of love, but are for the most part the instruments of hatred in the execution of the greatest mischiefs. Few men are to be ruined till they are made confident of the contrary; and this cannot be done by threats, and owning the mischief that a man designs; but the pit-fall must be covered to invite the man to venture over it; all things must be sweetened with professions of love, friendly looks, and embraces. For it is oil that whets the razor, and the smoothest edge is still the sharpest: they are the complacencies of an enemy that kill, the closest hugs that stifle, and love must be pretended before malice can be effectually practised. In a word, he must get into his heart with fair *speeches* and *promises*, before he can come at it with his *dagger*. For surely no man fishes with a bare hook, or thinks that the net itself can be any enticement to the bird.

But now, if these outward shows are short of the love which we owe to our enemies, what can we say of those, who have not arrived so far as these, and yet pretend to be friends? Disdain and distance, sour looks and sharp words, are all the expressions of friend-

ship that some natures can manifest. I confess, where real kindnesses are done, these circumstantial garnitures of love (as I may so call them) may be dispensed with; and it is better to have a rough friend than a fawning enemy: But those who neither do good turns, nor give good looks, nor speak good words, have a love strangely subtil and metaphysical: For other poor mortals of an ordinary capacity are forced to be ignorant of that which they can neither *see*, *hear*, *feel*, nor *understand*. And thus much for the first negative. *The love that we are to show to enemies*, is not such a thing as may be learnt in a dancing school, nor in those shops of dissimulation, the courts and palaces of great men, where men's thoughts and words stand at an infinite distance, and their tongues and minds hold no correspondence with one another.

2. *Fair promises* are not the love that our Saviour here commands us to show our enemies. And yet these are one step above the former: For many fair speeches may be given, many courteous harangues uttered, and yet no promise made. And it is worth observing, how some great ones often delude, and simple ones suffer themselves to be deluded, by general discourses of courtesy. "As, take you no care, I will provide for you. Leave your business in my hands, and I will manage it with as much or more concern than you could yourself. What need you insist so much upon this or that in particular. I design better things for you." But all this while there is no determinate thing promised, so as to hold such an one by any real engagement, (supposing that his promises were such,) but perhaps when the next advantage comes in the way, the man is forgot and balked: Yet still those general speeches hold as true as ever, and so will continue notwithstanding all particular defeats; as indeed being never calculated for any thing else but to keep up the expectation of easy persons; to feed them for the present, and to fail them in the issue.

But now as these empty, glossing words are short of *promises*, so *promises* are equally short of *performances*. Concerning both which I shall say this, that there is no wise man, but had rather have had one *promise* than a thousand fair words, and one performance than ten thousand promises. For what trouble is it to promise, what charge is it for a man to give one his word, who never intends to give him any thing else? and yet according to the measures of the world, this must sometimes pass for an high piece of love; and many poor, unexperienced, believing souls, who have more honesty than wit, think themselves wrapt up into the third heaven, and actually possessed of some notable preferment, when they can say, *I have such a great person's promise for such and such a thing*. Have they so? Let them see if such a promise will pay rent, buy land, and maintain them like gentlemen. It is at the best but a future contingent; for either the man may die, or his interest may fail, or his mind may change, or ten thousand accidents may intervene. Promises are a diet none ever yet thrived by, and a man may feed upon them heartily, and never break his fast. In a word, I may say of human promises, what expositors say of divine prophecies, *that they are never understood, till they come to be fulfilled*.

But how speaks the scripture of these matters? Why, (Rom. xii. 20.) *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink*. It is not, promise him meat and drink a week hence, that is, perhaps, two days after he is dead with *thirst* and *hunger*. He who lives only upon reversions, and maintains himself with hope, and has nothing to cover him but the *clothes of dead men*, and the *promises of the living*, will find just as much relief from them, as a man in the depth of winter feels the heat of the following summer.

But bare promises are so far from answering Christ's precept, that if they are not realized in deeds, they become a plague and a calamity. For they raise an ex-

pectation, which, unsatisfied or defeated, is the greatest of torments ; they betray a man to a fallacious dependence, which bereaves him of the succours of his other endeavours, and in the issue leaves him to inherit the misery of disappointment, and unable to say any thing else for himself, but that he was credulous, and the promiser false.

3. But to advance a degree yet higher, *to do one or two kind offices for an enemy*, is not to fulfil the precept of *loving* him. He who clothes a naked man with a pair of gloves, and administers to one perishing with thirst a drop or two of water, reaches not the measure of his necessity ; but instead of relieving, only upbraids his want, and passes a jest upon his condition. It is like pardoning a man the debt of a penny, and in the mean time suing him fiercely for a talent. Love is then only of value, when it deals forth benefits in a full proportion to one's needs ; and when it shows itself both in universality and constancy. Otherwise it is only a trick to serve a turn, and carry on a design.

For he who would take a cleanly, unsuspected way to ruin his adversary, must pave the way to his destruction with some courtesies of a lighter sort, the sense of which shall take him off from his guard, and so lay him open to such a blow as shall destroy him at once. The skilful rider strokes and pleases the unruly horse, only that he may come so near him, as to get the bit into his mouth, and then he rides, and rules, and domineers over him at his pleasure. So he who hates his enemy with a cunning equal to his malice, will not strain to do this or that good turn for him, so long as it does not thwart, but rather promote the main design of this utter subversion. For all this is but like the helping a man over the stile, who is going to be hanged, which surely is no very great piece of civility.

In the reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, we read of one whom the grandees of the court procured to be made secretary of state, only to break his back in the busi-

ness of the queen of *Scots*, whose death they were then projecting. Like true courtiers they first engage him in that fatal scene, and then desert him in it, using him only as a tool to do a present state-job, and then to be reproached and ruined for what he had done. And a little observation of the world may show us, there is not only a course of beheading, or hanging, but also of *preferring men out of the way*. But this is not to *love an enemy*, but to hate him more artificially. He is ruined more speciously indeed, but not less efficaciously, than if he had been laid fast in a dungeon, or banished his country, or by a *packed jury* despatched into another world.

II. I come now to the second general thing proposed ; namely, to show *positively* what is included in the duty of loving our enemies.

1. A discharging the mind of all rancour and virulence towards an adversary. The scripture most significantly calls it the *leaven of malice*, and we know, that it is of a fermenting nature, and will in time diffuse a sourness upon a man's whole behaviour : But we will suppose, (which is yet seldom found,) that a man has such an absolute command over his heart, as for ever to stifle his disgusts, and to manage his actions in a constant contradiction to his affections ; yet all this is but the mystery of dissimulation, and to *act a part*, instead of acting a friend.

Besides the trouble to the very person who thus behaves himself. For enmity is a restless thing, and not to be dissembled without some torment to the mind that entertains it. It is more easily removed than covered. It is as if a man should endeavour to keep the sparks from flying out of a furnace, or as if a birth should be stopped when it is ripe and ready for delivery, which surely would be a pain greater than that of bringing forth.

He who is resolved to hate his enemy, and yet not to show it, has turned the edge of his hatred inwards,

and becomes a tyrant to himself; he could not wish his mortal adversary a greater misery, than thus to carry a mind always swelling, and ever ready to burst, and yet never to give it vent.

But on the other side, it is no pain for a man to appear what he is, and to declare a real principle of love in sensible demonstrations: Does a man therefore find that both his duty and his interest require, that he should deport himself with all signs of love to his enemies? Let him but take this easy course as to entertain the thing in his heart, which he would manifest in his converse, and then he will find that his work is as natural and easy, as it is for fire to cast abroad a flame. Art is difficult, but whatsoever is natural is *easy* too.

2. To love an enemy is to do him all the real offices of kindness, that opportunity shall lay in our way. Love is of too substantial a nature to be made up of mere negatives, and withal too operative to terminate in bare desires. Does Providence cast any of my enemies' concerns under my power; as his health, his estate, preferment, &c.? Why, in all this it gives me an opportunity to manifest, whether or no I can reach the sublimity of this precept of *loving my enemies*.

Is my enemy sick, and it is in my power to *cure him as easily*, or to *kill him as safely*, as if I were his physician? Christianity here commands me to be concerned for his weakness, and to rescue him from the grave; and in a word, to preserve that life, which, perhaps, would have once destroyed mine.

Do I see my enemy circumvented, and like to be undone in his estate? I must not sit still and see him ruined, and tell him *I wish him well*; which is a contradiction in practice, and an impudent, ill-natured sarcasm: But I must contribute my hearty assistance to discover the fraud and to repel the force; and as readily keep him from being poor, as relieve him if he were. I must be as forward in the pursuit of the

thief, who stole his goods who once plundered mine, as if the injury had lit upon my kinsman or myself. And lastly, does it lie in my way to put in a word to dash or promote my enemy's business or interest? To give him a *secret blow*, such a one as shall strike his interest to the ground for ever, and he never know the hand from whence it came? Can I by my power obstruct his lawful advantage and preferments, and so reap the diabolical satisfaction of a close revenge? Can I do him all the mischief imaginable, and that easily, safely, and successfully; and so applaud myself in my power, my wit, and my subtle contrivances, for which the world shall court me as formidable and considerable? Yet all these wretched practices and accursed methods of growing great, and rising by the fall of an enemy, are to be detested as infinitely opposite to that innocence and clearness of spirit, that openness and freedom from design, that becomes a professor of Christianity.

On the contrary, amidst all these opportunities of doing mischief, I must espouse my enemy's just cause, as his advocate. I must help it forward by favourable speeches of his person, acknowledgment of his worth, by a fair construction of doubtful passages; and all this, if need be, in secret, where my enemy neither sees nor hears me do him these services, and consequently where I have all the temptations to do otherwise. In short, the gospel enjoins a greater love to our enemies, than men, for the most part, now-a-days, show their friends.

3. The crowning instance of our love to our enemies, is to *pray* for them. For by this a man, as it were, acknowledges himself unable to do enough for his enemy; and therefore he calls in the assistance of heaven, and engages Omnipotence to complete the kindness. He would fain out-do himself, and finding his own stores short, he repairs to Infinity. Prayer for a man's self is indeed a choice duty, yet it is but a

kind of lawful and pious selfishness. For who would not be importunate for his own concerns? But when I pray as heartily for my enemy, as I do for my *daily bread*; when I strive with prayers and tears to make God his friend, who himself will not be mine; when I reckon his felicity amongst my own necessities; surely this is such a love as, in a literal sense, may be said to reach up to heaven. For nobody judges that a trivial thing, for which he dares to pray: No man comes into the presence of a king to beg pins. And therefore if a man did not look upon the good of his enemy, as a thing that nearly affected himself, he could not own it as a matter of a petition, and endeavour to concern God about that, with which he will not concern himself. And upon the same ground also is inferred the necessity of man's personal endeavouring the good of his enemy: For prayer without endeavour is but an affront to the throne of grace, and a lazy throwing that, which is our own duty, upon God. As if a man should say, God *forgive* you, God *relieve* you, for *I will not*. But if to pray for an enemy be a duty, surely the *manner* in which we do it, ought to be so too; and not such as shall turn a supplication for him into a satyr against him, by representing him in our prayers under the character of one void of all *grace* and *goodness*, and consequently a much fitter object for God's vengeance than his mercy. And yet there was a time in which this way of praying was in no small vogue with a certain sort of men, who would allow neither the *gift* nor *spirit* of prayer to any but themselves. For if at any time they prayed for those whom they accounted their *enemies*, (and that only because they had done so much to make them so,) it could not be properly called an *interceding* with God for them, but a downright *inditing and arraigning them before God*, as a pack of graceless wretches and villains, and avowed enemies to the *power* and *purity* of the *gospel*. This and the like, I say, was the devout language of their prayers,

sometimes by *intimation*, and sometimes by direct *expression* : And thus under the colour of some plausible, artificial words, it was but for them to call those whom they maligned *Antichrist*, and themselves the *kingdom of Christ*, and then they might very laudably pray for the *pulling down* of the one, and the *setting up* of the other, and thereby no doubt answer all the measures of a *sanctified, self-denying* petition. But as those days are at an end, so it were to be wished that such kind of praying were so too ; especially since our church, I am sure, has so much charity as to teach all of her communion to pray for those, who are not only enemies to our *persons*, but also to our very *prayers*.

And thus I have endeavoured to show, what it is to *love our enemies* ; though I will not say that I have recounted all the instances in which this duty may exert itself. For love is infinite, and the methods of its acting, innumerable. But I suppose that I have marked out those generals, which all particulars may be fairly reduced to.

And now, before I proceed to the *motives* and *arguments* to enforce the duty, I shall, to prevent some abuses of this doctrine, show what is not inconsistent with this loving our enemies ; and that is to secure ourselves against them. I am to *love* my enemy, but not so as to *hate* myself : If my love to him be a *copy*, I am sure the love to myself ought to be the *original*. Charity is to diffuse itself *abroad*, but yet it may lawfully *begin at home* : For the precept surely is not unnatural and irrational ; nor can it state the duty of Christians in opposition to the privileges of men, and command us tamely to surrender up our lives and estates as often as the hands of violence would wrest them from us. We may love our enemies, but are not therefore to be fond of their enmity. And though I am commanded when my enemy *thirsts* to *give him drink*, yet it is not when

he thirsts for my *blood*. It is my duty to give him an alms, but not to let him take my estate. Princes and governors may very well secure themselves with laws and arms against implacable enemies for all this precept: They are not bound to leave the state defenceless, against the plots and insurrections of those, who are pleased to think themselves *persecuted*, if they are not permitted to *reign*. We may, with a very fair comportment with this precept, love our enemies' persons, while we hate their principles and counterplot their designs.

III. I come now to the last thing, *viz.* to assign motives and arguments to enforce this love to our enemy; and they shall be taken, 1. From the condition of our enemy's person. 2. From the excellency of the duty. 3. From the great examples that recommend it; and

1. For the first of these, if we consider our enemy, we shall find that he sustains several capacities, which may give him a just claim to our charitable affection.

(1.) As first he is joined with us in the community of the same nature. He is a *man*; and so far bears the image and superscription of our heavenly Father. He may cease to be our friend, but he cannot cease to be our brother. For we all descended from the same loins, and though *Esau* hates *Jacob*, and *Jacob* supplants *Esau*, yet they once lay in the same womb; and therefore the saying of *Moses* may be extended to all men at variance; *Why do ye wrong one another, for ye are brethren?* If my enemy were a snake or a viper, I could do no more than trample upon him: But shall I hate the seed of the woman as much as I do that of the serpent? We hold that God loves the most sinful of his creatures so far as they are his creatures; and the very devils could not sin themselves out of an excellent nature, though out of an happy condition.

Even war, which is the rage of mankind, and observes no laws but its own, yet offers quarter to an

enemy ; I suppose, because enmity does not obliterate humanity, nor wholly cancel the sympathies of nature. For every man does, or (I am sure) he may, see something of himself in his enemy, and a transcript of those perfections for which he values himself.

And therefore those inhuman butcheries which some men have acted upon others, stand upon record, not only as the crimes of persons, but also as the reproach of our very nature, and excusable upon no account whatsoever, but that the persons who acted such cruelties upon other men, first ceased to be men themselves, and were indeed to be reckoned as so many anomalies and exceptions from mankind ; persons of another make or mould from the rest of the sons of *Adam*, and deriving their original not from the *dust*, but rather from the *stones of the earth*.

(2.) An enemy, notwithstanding his enmity, may be yet the proper object of our love, because it sometimes so falls out, that he is of the same *religion* with us ; and the very business of religion is to unite, and to put, as it were, a spiritual cognation between souls. I am sure, this is the great purpose of the christian religion, which never joins men to Christ, but by first joining them amongst themselves, and making them *members one of another*, as well as knitting them all to the *same head*. By how much the more intolerable were our late zealots, in their pretences to a more refined strain of purity and converse with God ; while in the mean time their hearts could serve them to plunder, worry, and undo their poor brethren, only for their loyal adherence to their sovereign, sequestering and casting whole families out of their houses and livings to starve abroad in the wide world, against all the laws of God and man, and who, to this day, breathe the same rage towards all dissenters from them, should they once more get the *reforming sword* into their hands. What these men's *religion* may teach them, I know not, but I am sure, it is so far from teaching them to love their enemies,

that they found their bitterest, most inveterate hatreds only upon *religion*; which has taught them first to call their malice zeal, and then to think it their duty to be *malicious* and *implacable*.

(3.) An enemy may be the proper object of our love, because, though perhaps he is not capable of being changed and made a friend by it, (which, for any thing I know, is next to impossible,) yet he is capable of being ashamed and rendered *inexcusable*. And shame may smooth over his behaviour, though no kindness can change his disposition; upon which account it is, that so far as a man shames his enemy, so far he also disarms him. For he leaves him stript of the assistance and good opinion of the world round about him, without which it is impossible for any man living to be considerable, either in his friendship or enmities.

Love is the *fire* that must both heap and kindle *those coals upon our enemies' head*, that shall either melt or consume. For that man I account as good as consumed, whom all people, even upon the common concern of mankind, abhor for his ingratitude, as a pest and a public enemy. So that if my enemy is resolved to treat me spitefully, notwithstanding all my endeavours to oblige him, and if he will still revile and rail at me, after I have employed both tongue and hand to serve him, surely I shall by this means at least make his virulent words recoil upon his bold face and his foul mouth; and so turn that stream of public detestation justly upon himself, which he was endeavouring to bring upon me. And if I do no more, it is yet worth while, even upon a temporal account, to obey this precept of *Christ*, of *loving my enemy*. And thus much for the first general argument to enforce this duty, grounded upon the *condition of my enemy's person*.

2. A *second* motive or argument to the same, shall be taken from the excellency of the duty itself. It is the highest perfection that human nature can reach

unto. It is an imitation of the divine goodness, which shines upon the heads, and rains upon the fields of the sinful and unjust, and heaps blessings upon those, who are busy only to *heap up wrath* to themselves. To *love an enemy*, is to stretch humanity as far as it will go. It is an heroic action, and such an one as grows not upon any ordinary plebeian spirit.

The excellency of the duty is sufficiently proclaimed by the difficulty of its practice. For how hard is it, when the passions are high, and the sense of an injury quick, and power ready, for a man to deny himself in that luscious morsel of revenge! to do violence to himself, instead of doing it to his enemy! and to command down the strongest principles, and the greatest heats, that usually act the soul when it exerts itself upon such objects.

And the difficulty of such a behaviour is no less declared by its being so rarely observed in men. For whom almost can we see, who opens his arms to his enemies, or puts any other bounds to his hatred of him but satiety or disability? Indeed, where such a pitch of love is found, it appears glorious and glistening in the eyes of all, and much admired and commended it is, but yet for the most part no otherwise than as we see men admiring and commending some rare piece of art, which they never intend to imitate. Nothing certainly but an excellent disposition, improved by a mighty grace, can bear a man *up to this perfection*.

3. The third motive or argument shall be drawn from the great *examples* which recommend this duty to us; and first of all, from that of our blessed Saviour, whose *footsteps* in the paths of love we may trace out and follow by his own *blood*. He gave his life for sinners; that is, for enemies, yea, and enemies, with the highest aggravation; for nothing can make one man so much an enemy to another, as sin makes him an enemy to God.

I say unto you, love your enemies, (says Christ,)

that is, I emphatically, I, who say it by my example as much as by my precept. For Christ *went about doing good*, (*Acts x. 38.*) Yea, and he did it still in a miracle. Every work that he did, was equally beneficial and miraculous. And the place where he did such wonders of charity was *Jerusalem*, a city red with the blood of God's messengers, and paved with the skulls of prophets; a city which, he knew, would shortly complete all its cruelty and impiety in his own murder, though he was the promised and long-expected Messiah. And in the prologue to this murder, his violent attachment, when one of his enemies was wounded, he bestowed a miracle upon his cure; so tender was he of his mortal enemies. Like a lamb that affords wherewithal, both to feed and clothe its very butcher, nay, while he was actually hanging upon the cross, he uttered a passionate prayer for the forgiveness of his murderers; so desirous was he, that though they had the sole acting, yet that he himself should have the whole feeling of their sin. In fine, now that he sits at the right hand of his Father triumphant, from whence he could with much more ease confound his most daring enemies, than the most potent grandee can crush his meanest dependants; yet he treats them with all the methods of patience and arts of reconciliation, and in a word endures, *with much long suffering*, those *vessels of wrath*, who seem even resolved to perish.

And now, though after such an example, this sort of argument for the *loving our enemies* can be carried no *higher*, yet, blessed be God, that is not so wholly exhausted by any one example, but that it may be carried *further*; and that by several instances, which though they do by no means come up to a just comparison with it, yet ought to be owned for noble imitations of it. And such an one this happy day affords us, a day consecrated to the solemn commemoration of the *nativity* and *return* of a prince, who, having been most barba-

rously driven out of his kingdoms, and afterwards as miraculously restored to them, brought with him the brightest and most stupendous instance of this virtue, that, next to what has been observed of our Saviour himself, was ever yet shown by man ; Providence seeming to have raised up this prince, as it had done his father before him, to give the world a glorious demonstration, that the most *injured* of men might be the most *merciful* of men too. For after the highest of wrongs that a sovereign could suffer from his subjects, scorning all revenge as more below him than the very persons whom he might have been revenged upon, he gloried in nothing so much as in giving *mercy* the upper hand of *majesty* itself, making *amnesty* his symbol, and *forgiveness* the peculiar, signalizing character of his reign ; herein resembling the Almighty himself, (as far as mortality can,) who seems to claim a greater glory for *sparing* and redeeming man, than for *creating* him. So that in a word, as our Saviour has made *love to our enemies* one of the chiefest badges of our religion, so our king has almost made it the very mark of our *allegiance*.

Thus even to a prodigy *merciful* has he shown himself ; *merciful* by *inclination* and by *extraction* ; *merciful* in his *example* and in his *laws*, and thereby expressing the utmost *dutifulness* of a son, as well as the highest *magnanimity* and clemency of a prince ; while he is still making that good upon the *throne*, which the royal martyr, his father, had enjoined upon the *scaffold* ; where he died pardoning and praying for those, whose malice he was then falling a victim to ; and this with a charity so unparalleled, and a devotion so fervent, that the *voice of his prayers*, 'tis to be hoped, drowned the very *cry of his blood*. But I love not to dwell upon such tragedies, save only to illustrate the height of one contrary by the height of another ; and therefore as an humble follower of the princely pattern here set before us, I shall draw a veil of silence over all ; especially since it surpasses the power of

words sufficiently to set forth, either the greatness of the crimes *forgiven*, or of the mercy that *forgave* them.

But to draw to a close : We have here had the highest and the hardest duty, perhaps, belonging to a Christian, both recommended to our judgment by *argument*, and to our practice by *example* ; what remains, but that we submit our *judgment* to the one, and govern our *practice* by the other ? and for that purpose, that we beg of God an assistance equal to the difficulty of the duty enjoined ; for certainly it is not an ordinary measure of grace, that can conquer the opposition that *flesh* and *blood*, and corrupt reason itself, after all its convictions, will be sure to make to it. The greatest miseries that befall us in this world are from *enemies*, and so long as men naturally desire to be happy, it will be naturally as hard to them to love those who, they know, are the grand obstacles to their being so. The light of nature will convince a man of many duties, which it will never enable him to perform. And if we should look no further than bare nature, this seems to be one cut out rather for our admiration than our practice ; it being not more difficult (where grace does not interpose) to *cut off a right hand*, than to reach it heartily to the relief of an inveterate, implacable adversary. And yet God expects this from us, and that so *peremptorily*, that he has made the pardon of our enemies the indispensable condition of our own. And therefore that wretch (whosoever he was) who, being pressed hard upon his death-bed to pardon a notable enemy which he had, answered, *that if he died indeed, he pardoned him, but if he lived he would be revenged on him* ; that wretch, I say, and every other such image of the devil, no doubt, went out of the world so, that he had better never have come into it. In fine, after we have said the utmost upon this subject that we can, I believe we shall find this the result of all, that he is an happy man *who has no enemies*, and he a much happier, who has never so many, and *can pardon them*.

DISCOURSE XIV.

THE EVILS OF KNOWLEDGE.

ECCLES. i. 18. *

In much wisdom there is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.

It is a saying usual, and of great reason, that we are to believe the skilful in their own profession. And therefore, if we would understand the nature, properties, and effects of knowledge, none can be so fit to inform us, as he, who by the very verdict of omniscience, was, of all men, the most knowing.

Nothing, indeed, is more common than for every man almost to pass an universal censure upon all persons and things; but none can despise a thing, rationally, but he who knows it thoroughly. Otherwise, though a man should pass a right judgment upon a thing, yet he does it only by accident; and therefore, though the thing spoke be truth and wisdom, yet the speaker of it utters it like a fool. None but a scholar can be a competent judge of knowledge; and therefore all the encomiums of it, that now fly about the world, must come and be tried according to the verdict of this rule.

First, therefore, we shall find those that are loudest in their commendations, and highest in their admirations of learning, are, for the most part, such as were never bred to it themselves: Hence it is, that such, of all others, are the most desirous to breed their sons scholars; so that if we take a list of the most re-

nowned philosophers in former ages, and the most eminent divines in the latter, we shall find that they were, for the most part, of mean and plebeian parentage.

Upon this score also there came to be so many free schools and endowed places for learning ; because those are most apt to send their children to study, who, being poor and low, are not able to maintain them in it, and therefore need the benevolence of others, to bring their imprudent designs to maturity. Let this therefore be fixed upon, as one great reason that the praise of knowledge is so great in the world, viz. that much the major part of the world is ignorant ; and ignorant men are indeed very fit to praise and admire, but very unfit to judge.

I am not insensible that many will here presently be apt to stop me with those eulogies that the most learned bestow upon knowledge, still adorning it with such panegyrics, such high words and expressions, as if rhetoric was invented for nothing else but to describe and set off her praise. But, in answer to this, though I might note, that to be learned and to be wise are things very different, yet I shall produce another reason of these commendations, which, in all probability, is this ; that learned men would not seem and be judged fools, for spending their time upon so empty a thing ; and therefore, as those that have been deceived into a ridiculous sight, do yet commend it, that they may not be thought to have been deceived, but may bring others into the same cheat with themselves.

So here, should philosophers confess, that all the time they spent about *materia prima*, *esse per se*, and *esse per accidens*, they were laboriously doing nothing, the world would be apt to hiss and to explode them, and others would be so wise, as seeing the example, to forbear the imitation. But now, when a man finds himself to be really deceived, the only relief that remains to him is to cover the report of it, and to get companions in the deception.

If what has been hitherto said, does not satisfy, I can only take sanctuary in this ; that the same was *Solomon's* judgment ; and I desire to know, whether those philosophers, who so profusely commend learning, knew more than he, and saw that worth in knowledge which he did ? As for *Aristotle*, who for these many ages has carried the repute of philosophy from all the rest, he certainly was not wiser than *Solomon* ; for he is reported to have stolen most of his philosophy out of *Solomon's* writings, and to have suppressed them from the view of posterity.

I proceed therefore, and take up my assertion upon the warrant of his judgment, whom God has hitherto vouched *the wisest of men* ; and see no reason to alter it, till I am convinced by a wiser.

But, before I make any further progress, I must premise this ; any thing indeed said *against* knowledge, is against that only, that is so much adored by the world, and falsely called philosophy, and yet more significantly surnamed by the apostle *vain philosophy* ; and that too, with no other intent than to dash the over-weening pride of those that have it, and to divert the admiration of those that have it not, to some better and more deserving object.

But as for those parts of knowledge, that are either instrumental to our knowledge of the will of God, or conduce to the good of society, in the state that mankind now is, I must not be thought therefore to speak against them, if from the text I impartially show those miseries and sorrows, that through our sin and weakness they are attended with. It is the effect of sin, that duty is accompanied with sorrow ; and that by such an unfortunate necessity of grief, we cannot attain the happiness we design to ourselves in the end, unless for a time we quit it in the use of the means.

Now, the design of this portion of scripture is to rectify the absurd opinions of the world, concerning the great idol of mankind, knowledge ; and to take

down their excessive estimation of it, by showing that it is the cause, or at least the inseparable companion of sorrow. And, in prosecution of the words, I shall demonstrate it to be so in these three respects : I. Of the nature and properties of the thing itself. II. Of the laborious acquisition of it. III. Of its effects and consequents.

I. First of all then, knowledge is the parent of sorrow from its very nature, as being the instrument and means by which the afflicting quality of the object is conveyed to the mind ; for as nothing delights, so nothing troubles till it is known. The merchant is not troubled as soon as his ship is cast away, but as soon as he hears it is.

The affairs and objects that we converse with, have most of them a fitness to afflict and disturb the mind. And as the colours lie dormant, and strike not the eye, till the light actuates them into a visibility, so those afflictive qualities never exert their sting till knowledge displays them, and slides them into the apprehension.

Nihil scire, vita jucundissima est. It is the empty vessel that makes the merry sound ; which is evident from those whose intellectuals are ruined with phrensy or madness ; who so merry, so free from the lash of care ? their understanding is gone, and so is their trouble.

It is the philosopher that is pensive, that looks downwards in the posture of the mourner. It is the open eye that weeps.

Aristotle affirms, that there was never a great scholar in the world, but had in his temper a dash and mixture of melancholy ; and if melancholy be the temper of knowledge, we know that it is also the complexion of sorrow, the scene of mourning and affliction.

Solomon could not separate his wisdom from vexation of spirit. We are first taught our knowledge with the rod, and with the severities of discipline. We get it with some smart, but improve it with more.

The world is full of objects of sorrow, and knowledge enlarges our capacities to take them in. None but the wise man can know himself to be miserable.

I might now, from the nature of knowledge, pass to the properties of it, and show its uncertainty, its poor-ness, and utter inability to contribute any thing to the solid enjoyments of life. But before I enter upon this, there may be a question started, whether or no there be indeed any such thing as true knowledge in the world? for there want not reasons that seem to insinuate that there is none.

As, 1st. Because knowledge, if true, is upon that score certain and infallible; but the certainty of the knowledge cannot be greater than the certainty of the faculty or medium by which it is acquired: Now all knowledge is conveyed through sense, and sense is subject to err, and to be imposed upon. For how often does our eye tell us that the trees and the banks run, and that the ship or the coach stands still? How does it abridge the sun to the compass of a few spans, to a small ignoble circumference? It follows therefore, that we cannot be assured of the truth of that knowledge that commences upon the fallible report of sense, indeed no more than we can be certain that a thing is true, because a known liar has affirmed it.

2dly, Knowledge is properly the apprehension of a thing by its cause; but the causes of things are not certainly known: this by most is confessed, but may be proved without confession; for since none ever assigned a certain cause of any effect, but that others, with the same probability, have assigned a clear different cause, it is most evident, that we do not certainly know the causes of things, and consequently neither the things themselves.

3dly, To know a thing is to apprehend it as really it is, but we apprehend things only as they appear; so that all our knowledge may properly be defined, the apprehension of appearances. But now it is undeni-

able, that things oftentimes appear otherwise than they are ; and when they do appear as indeed they are, yet there is no certain rule to discern that they do so.

Other arguments might be brought to show, that it is not without cause that there is such a sect of men as sceptics in the world. And though I will not say, that these arguments prove that there is no such thing as knowledge, yet thus much, at least, they seem to prove, that we cannot be assured that there is any such thing.

But you will reply, that this overthrows the hypothesis of the text, which takes it for granted that there is such a thing as knowledge. I answer, it does not : for the arguments proceed against knowledge, strictly and accurately so taken ; but the text speaks of it in a popular way, of that which the world commonly esteems knowledge.

And that this is but a poor, worthless thing, of no efficacy to advance the real concerns of human happiness, might be made most evident.

For, first, it is certain that knowledge does not either constitute or alter the condition of things, but only transcribe the face of nature as it finds it ; and therefore is but a low, ignoble thing, and differs as much from nature itself, as he that only reports great things from him that does them. If I should run through the whole series of sciences, from top to bottom, I am sure I could verify this assertion.

For what am I, or any one else, the better, whether God foresees future contingents from the determination and decree of his will, or from the infinite actuality of his nature, by which his existence is before-hand with all future duration ?

What am I concerned, whether he punishes sin by the necessary egress of his vindictive justice, or by a freedom of choice ?

Of what such great necessity is it to know, whether Christ intended his death for all mankind, or only for

a select company? when it is certain on both sides, that the benefit of his death is offered conditionally to all those, and only to those, who shall believe; and that upon either supposition, whosoever believes shall be saved.

And to descend to things of an inferior nature. What is it to me, whether the will has a power to determine itself, or is determined by objects from without? when it is certain, that those here that hold a different opinion, yet continue in the same course of action.

Is any use of human life served by the knowledge of this, whether the vegetative, sensitive, and rational soul in man, be three distinct souls, or only three denominations, from three distinct operations issuing from the same soul?

Or am I any ways advantaged, whether the soul *wills*, *understands*, and *performs* the rest of its actions by faculties distinct from itself, or immediately by its own substance?

Is it of any moment, whether the soul of man comes into the world with carnal notions, or whether it comes bare, and receives all from the after-reports of sense?

What am I benefitted, whether the sun moves about the earth, or whether the sun is the center of the world, and the earth is indeed a planet, and wheels about that? Whether it be one or the other, I see no change in the course of nature. Day and night keep the same order; winter and summer observe the same returns; our fruit ripens as soon under one hypothesis as under the other; and the day begins no sooner, nor stays any longer, with *Ptolemy* than with *Copernicus*.

Or what am I bettered, whether all motion is performed by faculties, powers, or inherent qualities; or in a mechanical way, by the impulse of one body upon another, the greater overcoming and moving the less?

Who in the world finds any change in his affairs, whether there be little vacuities in the air, or whether there is no space, but what is filled up with body?

What am I altered, whether colour be a quality emergent from the different contemperature of the elements, or only the reflection of the light upon the different situation of the parts of the body?

I could reckon up an hundred more such problems as these, about an inquiry into which men are so laborious, and in a supposed resolution of which they so much boast; which shows, that that which passes with the world for knowledge, is but a slight, trivial thing; and that men's being so eager in the quest of it, is like sweeping the house, raising the dust, and keeping a great ado only to find pins.

II. Pass we now to show, how that knowledge is the cause of sorrow, in respect of the troublesome acquisition of it. For is there any labour comparable to that of the brain? any toil like a continual digging in the mines of knowledge? any pursuit so dubious and difficult as that of truth? any attempt so sublime as to give a reason of things?

When a man must be led a long trace, from the effect up to an hidden, remote cause, and then back again, take a survey of the several virtues and active qualities of that cause, in its numerous effects:

Will an ordinary industry be able to break open those rarities that God and nature has locked up, and set out of the reach of a vulgar endeavour! how hard is it to draw a principle into all its consequences, and to unravel the mysterious fertility but of one proposition!

A man must be always engaged in difficult speculation, and endure all the inconveniences that attend it; which indeed are more and greater than attend any other sort of life whatsoever.

The soldier, it is confessed, converses with dangers, and looks death in the face; but then he bleeds with honour, he grows pale gloriously, and dies with the same heat and fervor that gives life to others.

But he does not, like the scholar, kill himself in

cold blood ; sit up and watch when there is no enemy ; and, like a silly fly, buz about his own candle till he has consumed himself.

Then again ; the husbandman who has the toil of sowing and reaping, he has his reward in his very labour ; and the same corn that employs, also fills his hand. He who labours in the field indeed wearies, but then he also helps and preserves his body.

But study, it is a weariness without exercise, a laborious sitting still, that wracks the inward, and destroys the outward man ; that sacrifices health to conceit, and clothes the soul with the spoils of the body ; and, like a stronger blast of lightning, not only meets the sword, but also consumes the scabbard.

Nature allows men a great freedom, and never gave an appetite but to be an instrument of enjoyment ; nor made a desire, but in order to the pleasure of its satisfaction. But he that will increase knowledge, must be content not to enjoy ; and not only to cut off the extravagancies of luxury, but also to deny the lawful demands of convenience, to forswear delight, and look upon pleasure as his mortal enemy.

He must call that study, that is indeed confinement ; he must converse with solitude, walk, eat, and sleep thinking, read volumes, devour the choicest authors, and (like *Pharaoh's* kine) after he has devoured all, look lean and meagre. He must be willing to be weak, sickly, and consumptive ; even to forget when he is an hungry, and to digest nothing but what he reads.

He must read much, and perhaps meet with little ; turn over much trash for one grain of truth ; study antiquity till he feels the effects of it ; and, like the cock in the fable, seek pearls in a dunghill, and perhaps rise to it as early. This is,

Esse quod Arcesilas ærumnosique Solones :

To be always wearing a meditating countenance, to ruminate, mutter, and talk to a man's self, for want of bet-

ter company ; in short, to do all those things, which in other men are counted madness, but in a scholar pass for his profession.

We may take a view of all those callings, to which learning is necessary, and we shall find that labour and misery attend them all. . . . And first, for the study of physic : Do not many lose their own health, while they are learning to restore it to others ? Do not many shorten their days, and contract incurable diseases, in the midst of *Galen* and *Hippocrates* ? get consumptions amongst receipts and medicines, and die while they are conversing with remedies ?

Then for the law : Are not many called to the grave, while they are preparing for a call to the bar ? Do they not grapple with knots and intricacies, perhaps not so soon dissolved as themselves ? Do not their bodies wither and decay, and, after a long study of the law, look like an estate that has passed through a long suit in law ?

But, above all, let the divine here challenge the greatest share ; who, if he takes one in ten in the profit, I am sure, may claim nine in ten in the labour. 'Tis one part of his business, indeed, to prepare others for death ; but the toil of his function is like to make the first experiment upon himself.

People are apt to think this an easy work, and that to be a divine is nothing else but to wear black, to look severely, and to speak confidently for an hour ; but confidence and propriety is not all one ; and if we fix but upon this one part of his employment, as easy as it seems to be,

Expertus multum sudes, multumque labores.

But the divine's office spreads itself into infinite other occasions of labour ; and, in those that reach the utmost of so great a profession, it requires depth of knowledge, as well as heights of eloquence.

To sit and hear is easy, and to censure what we have heard, much easier. But whatsoever his perform-

ance is, it inevitably puts us upon an act of religion ; if good, it invites us to a profitable hearing ; if otherwise, it inflicts a short penance, and gives an opportunity to the virtue of patience.

But, in sum, to demonstrate and set forth the divine's labour, I shall but add this, that he is the only person to whom the whole economy of Christianity gives no cessation, nor allows him so much as the sabbath for a day of rest.

III. Knowledge increases sorrow, in respect of its effects and consequents ; in three of which I shall give instance.

1. The first effect of the increase of knowledge, is an increase of the desire of knowledge. It is the covetousness of the understanding, the dropsy of the soul, that drinks itself a-thirst, and grows hungry with surfeit and satisfaction ; it is the only thing in which reason itself is irrational.

Now, an endless desire does of necessity vex and torment the person that has it. For misery and vexation is properly nothing else but an eager appetite not satisfied.

He that is always a getting, is always looking upon himself as in want. And he that is perpetually desiring to know, is perpetually thinking of himself as ignorant ; namely, in respect of those things that he desires to know.

In fine, happiness is fruition ; but there is no fruition where there is a constant desire. For enjoyment swallows up desire, and that which fulfils the expectation also ends it.

But while desire is active, and the mind is still a craving and reaching at somewhat, it supposes our happiness to be at a distance ; for no man reaches after what he has already.

The bottomless appetite of knowledge will not be satisfied, and then we know that sorrow is the certain result, and inseparable companion of dissatisfaction.

2. The second unhappy effect of knowledge is, that it rewards its followers with the miseries of poverty, and clothes them with rags. Reading of books consumes the body, and buying of them, the estate.

The mind of man is a narrow thing, and cannot master several employments; it is wholly employed, whether in the pursuit of riches, or in the quest of learning, and no man grew either rich or learned merely by the diversion of his spare hours.

He therefore that buries his strength, his thoughts, his opportunities, in a book, can he possibly be rich, unless Providence itself should trade for him, the *Exchange* follow him, and the *Indies* travel to him? but certainly these would be vain expectations. The east now-a-days affords no such wise men, that will take a long journey only to make presents, and to give of their gold and their treasures.

Hence it is that the philosopher, *omnia sua secum portat*; he numbers no flocks, tells no acres of ground, has no change of raiment, and is not solicitous *which*, but *what* he shall put on: He never aspires to any purchase, unless perhaps of some dead man's study; at the same time buying the relics of another's death, and the instruments of his own.

Hereupon he is put to the worst, and the most discouraging of all miseries, which is, to be beholden and obliged. For what was *Aristotle* without his *Alexander*? *Virgil* without *Augustus*? *Horace* without *Mecenas*? and other poets, like their own wreaths of joy, they were always creeping about something for a support. A scholar without a patron is insignificant. He must have something to lean upon. He is like an unhappy cause, always depending.

We read of the prophet's accommodation and furniture in the house of the *Shunamite*, (2 *Kings* iv. 10.) *A little chamber, a table, a stool, and a candlestick*; and perhaps, if he had lived there for any considerable time, he would have been reckoned not so much

one of the inhabitants, as part of the furniture of the house.

These are the happy effects of study and knowledge ; and as most kinds of study hinder men from getting estates, so there are some that cannot be undertook without an estate, nor long pursued without the loss of it. As for instance ; he that follows chemistry, must have riches to throw away upon the study of it ; whatever he gets by it, those furnaces must be fed with gold. In short, I will not say, that the study of knowledge always finds men poor, but sure it is, that 'tis seldom or never but it leaves them so.

3. The third fatal effect of knowledge is, that it makes the person who has it the butt of envy, the mark of obloquy and contention. Whoever sees another more knowing than himself, he presently thinks him a reproach to his understanding : and although he himself will not undergo the labour of knowledge, yet he will not allow another the fame.

Hence come all the jars between learned men, the invectives and bitter books, the wars of critics, and the controversies of the schools, all managed with such keenness and virulence, throwing dirt, and disgorging daggers at one another's reputation ; for no other injury in the world, but because the adverse party is thought to know more.

As *Grotius*, in one of his poems, speaking of knowledge, and the invidiousness of it, not inelegantly expresses it,

Quàm nil sit illud quod vocamus his scire,

Quo nos superbi tollimus caput cælo.

Calcamus alios, invicemque calcamur.

To trample, and to be trampled upon ; to write, and to be writ against, is the lot and effect of learning, as it lies under the malign aspect of a constant emulation.

Now one would think that envy, which like fire aspires as well as consumes, and always strikes high, should not prey upon a poor threadbare philosopher.

Yet if a man ventures but out of the old road, and attempts to enlarge the borders of philosophy, by the introduction of some new method, or the discovery of some new phenomena in nature, what a tragical outcry is presently raised against him, all the world pecking at him, and about his ears!

How are *Galileo* and *Copernicus* persecuted, and *Descartes* worried by almost every pen! Dreadful are the censures thundered out against them, both from the press and the pulpit, especially by those puny, systematical theologues, whose philosophy never went beyond *Keckerman*, nor their divinity beyond *Wollebuis*, and who would have all things new in the church, but nothing in the schools.

Thus must a man spend his fortune, consume his time, and rack his brain, and all to produce some birth that is like to be devoured as soon as born; to have his labours stifled or trod upon, his knowledge railed down, and his person exposed to the violence of those who are never witty but in their malice.

And now, if this be our lot, what remains for us to determine upon? Is there no way to get out of this unhappy dilemma, but that we must needs either dash upon the sorrows of knowledge, or the baseness of ignorance? Why, yes, there is a fair escape left us; for God has not placed mankind under a necessity either of sin or misery. And therefore, as to the matter in hand, it is only to continue our labour, but to alter the scene of it; and to make him, that is, the great Author, also the subject of our knowledge. For though there is a vanity and dissatisfaction in the knowledge of created, inferior objects, yet we are assured that it is life eternal to know God, and whom he has sent, his Son, Christ Jesus.

DISCOURSE XV.

OF COMPLAINTS OF THE TIMES

ECCLES. vii. 10.

Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these ? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.

IN the days of *Solomon*, when *Jerusalem* was the glory of the whole earth ; when it flourished as the metropolis not only of religion, but of the riches of the world ; when gold was made as common as silver, and silver as the stones of the street, (so that its inhabitants might even tread upon that, which so much commanded the hearts of others ;) when their exchequer was full, and their fleets at *Ophir* ; when religion was established, and the changing *ambulatory tabernacle* fixed into a *standing temple*, and all crowned with peace after the afflictions and wars of *David* ; when they flowed with *plenty*, and were governed with *wisdom* : yet, after all, the text here gives us a clear intimation, that *plenty* passed into *surfeit*, *fullness* into *loathing*, *loathing* into *discontent*, and that (as it always happens) into *Complaints of the Times*, viz. *That former days were better than these.*

When yet, upon a small reflection backward, we have the *calendar* of the former times *red*, with the *bloody house of Saul*, with the slaughter of the *priests*, and with the rebellions of *Shebah* and *Absalom* ; nothing but tumults, and changes ; and yet, in the verdict

of folly and faction, present enjoyments did so *far en-dear* former calamities, as to give them pre-eminence in the comparison.

But we see, there may *be folly* even in *Israel*; and if they were all of this mind, *Solomon* may justly seem to have monopolized all the wisdom to himself. We have him here chastising the sottishness of this inquiry: indeed the fittest person to encounter this exception, as being a king, and so able to control, being a preacher and so able to confute it; furnished with *power* for the one, and with *wisdom* for the other.

This is therefore the design of the words, to silence this malecontented inquiry; and supposing it to carry in it, its own confutation, he confutes it not by argument but reproof; not as a doubtful problem, but as a foolish question; and certainly the case must needs be carried, where the *fool* makes the question, and the *wisest of men* gives the answer.

The matter in controversy is, the pre-eminence of the former times above the present; when we must observe, that though the words run in the form of a question, yet they include a positive assertion, and a downright censure.

The inquiry being determined before it was proposed, now the charge of folly here laid upon it, may relate to the supposition upon which it is founded in a threefold respect, *viz.* I. Of a peremptory negation, as a thing absolutely to be denied that former times are better than the following. II. As a case very disputable, whether they are so or no. III. As admitting the supposition for true, that really they bear away the pre-eminence.

Yet in every one of these three most different respects, this inquiry ought to be exploded as absurd, impertinent, and irrational.

I. And first, it is ridiculous to ask, why former times are better than the present, if really they are not better, and so the very supposition itself proves false; this

is too *apparently* manifest to be matter of dispute, and if it is false, we shall endeavour to evince in the ensuing discourse ; but before I enter upon the proof, this one observation must be premised.

That time is said to be good or bad, not from any such quality inherent in itself, but by external denomination from the nature of those things, that do subsist in such a space of time. Time is the great *vehicle* of nature, not only for its swift passage and career, but because it carries in it the system of the world, from one stage of duration to another.

Now the world may be considered either in its natural or moral perfections. Some hold that for the former there is a continual diminution, an insensible decay in nature, things growing less and less, the very powers and faculties of them being weakened and shrunk ; and the *vital spirit*, or *humidum radicale* that God first infused into the great body of the universe being much exhausted, so that now, in every following age, the lamps of heaven burn dimmer and dimmer, till, at length, they dwindle into nothing, and so go out of themselves.

But, that this cannot be so, is clear from these reasons. 1. Because the ancientest histories generally describe things in the same posture heretofore that we find them now. 2. That admitting the most undiscernable degree of diminution, even to but one remove from none at all, the world, in the space of six thousand years, which date it almost now bears, by the continuance but of that small proportion of change, would have sunk even to nothing, or the smallness of an atom. 3. This will make the final annihilation of the world a mere effect of nature, and not of God's supernatural power, and so the consequent of it is irreligious.

Wherefore it being sure that the whole fabrick of the world stands in the same vigour and perfection of nature, which it had at first, we come next to that in

which we are now most concerned, to see whether or no it be impaired and sunk in its moral perfections, and what is the consequent of that, in political.

We have here an aphorism of *Horace* much inculcated. *Terra malos homines nunc educat atque pusillos.* But poetry never yet went for argument: and, *perhaps*, he might speak this, being *conscious* of his own manners, and reflecting upon his own stature. But that in the descent of succeeding generations, the following are not still the worse, I thus evince.

1. By Reason: because there were the same objects to work upon men, and the same dispositions and inclinations in men to be wrought upon before, that there are now. All the affairs of the world are the births, and issues of men's actions; and all actions come from the meeting and collision of faculties with suitable objects. There were then the same incentives of desire on the one side, the same attractiveness in riches, the same relish in sovereignty, the same temptation in beauty, the same delicacy in meats and tastes in *wines*; and, on the other side, there were the same appetites of covetousness and ambition, the same fuel of lust and intemperance.

And these are the wheels upon which the whole visible scene of affairs, ethic and politic, turns. The business of the world is imitation, and that which we call novelty, is nothing but repetition. The figure and motion of the world is circular, and experience no less than mathematicks will evince, that as it turns round, the same part must be often in the same place: one age indeed goes before another: but precedency is not always pre-eminence, and it is not unusual for a worse to go before a better, and for the servant to ride before and lead the way to his master.

2. But the same may be proved by History, and the records of antiquity; and he who would give it the utmost proof that it is capable of *from* this topic, must speak volumes, and preach libraries, bring a century

within a line, and an age into every period. But what need we go any further than the noblest and yet the nearest piece of antiquity, the Book of *Moses*.

Is the wickedness of the old world forgot, that we so aggravate the tempest of this? Was it destroyed with waters of oblivion? and has the deluge clean overwhelmed itself? In those days there were giants in sin, as well as sinners of the largest size and proportion.

And to take the world in a lower epoch, what after age could exceed the lust of the Sodomites, the *idolatry* and *tyranny* of the *Egyptians*, the fickle levity of the *Grecians*? and that monstrous mixture of all baseness in the Roman *Neros*, *Calligulas*, and *Domitians*, *emperors* of the world, and *slaves* to their *vice*?

And for the very state of *Israel*, in which this envious inquiry was first commenced, was that worse in *Canaan*, under the shadow and protection of a native royalty, than under the old servitude of *Egypt*? Was their present condition so bad, that while *Solomon* was courting *Pharoah's* daughter they should again court his *yoke*? woo their old slavery, and solicit a match with their former bondage. Was it so delightful a condition, to feed *Pharoah's* cattle, and to want straw themselves? instead of one prince, to have many task-masters? and to pay excise with their backs to maintain the tyrant's janisaries, and to feed their tormentors? But, it seems, being in a land flowing with honey, they were cloyed with that, and so loathing the *honey*, they grew in love with the sting.

But to bring the subject to our own doors; if we would be convinced that former ages are not always better than the following, I suppose we need not much rack our memories for a proof from experience.

I conceive the state of the Christian Church also may come within the compass of our present discourse. Take it in its infancy, and with the properties of infancy, it was weak and naked, vexed with poverty, torn

with persecution, and infected with heresy. It began the breach with *Simon Magus*, continued it with *Arius*, *Nestorius*, *Eutyches*, some rending her doctrine, some her discipline; and, what are the heresies that now trouble it, but new editions of the old with further gloss and enlargement? What is *Socinus*, but *Photinus* and *Pelagius* blended and joined together, in a third composition? What are our separatists and purity-pretending schismatics, but the tame brood and successors of the *Donatists*? only with this difference, that they had their head-quarters in *Meridie*, in the southern parts of the world, whereas ours seem to be derived to us from the *north*. These, I thought, had put it out of dispute, that no succeeding age of the church could have been worse: and, I think, the assertion might have stood firm, had not some late instances of our own age made it disputable.

But as for those, who clamour of the corruptions of our present church, and are so earnest to reduce us to the primitive model; if they mean the primitive truth, and not rather the primitive nakedness of it only, we know this, for *doctrine* and *discipline*, it is the very transcript of antiquity. But if their *design* be to make us like the primitive Christians, by driving us into *caves*, and *holes*, and *rocks*; to tear down temples and to make the sanctuary itself *fly* for refuge; to bring *beasts into churches*, and to send *churchmen* into *dens*; at the same time to make men beggars and to take away hospitals; it is but reason to desire, that they would first begin and exemplify this reformation in themselves; and, like the old Christians, with want and poverty, wander about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; though, if they should, that is not presently a sheep that wears the skin, nor would the sheep's clothing change the nature of the wolf.

I conclude therefore, that all these pompous declamations against the evil of the present times, set off by odious comparisons with the former, are the voice

of error and envy, of the worst of judges, malice and mistake : Though I cannot wonder if those assert affairs to be *out of order*, whose interest and desire it is to be once more *a reforming*.

And thus much for the first consideration of the suppositions, as a *thing false and to be denied*.

II. I shall now remit a little of this, and take it in a lower respect ; as a case disputable, whether the *preceding* or *succeeding* generations are to be preferred ; and here I shall dispute the matter on both sides.

And *First*, for antiquity we may plead thus. Certainly every thing is purest in the fountain, and most untainted in the original. The dregs are still the most likely to settle in the bottom, and to sink into the last ages. The world cannot but be the worse for wearing ; and it must needs have contracted much dross, when at the last it cannot be purged but by an universal fire.

Things are most fresh and fragrant in their beginning. The first-born is the most honourable, and it is primogeniture that entitles to the inheritance : 'Tis not present possessions, but an early pedigree, that gives nobility.

The older the world grows, the more decrepid it must be ; for age bows the body and so causes an obliquity : Every course of time leaves its mark behind it ; and every century adds a wrinkle to the face of nature.

As for knowledge, the former age still teaches the latter ; and which is likely to be most knowing, he that teaches or he that is taught ? The most compendious way of attaining wisdom is, the reading of histories, but history speaks not of the present time but of the former.

Besides, it was only the beginning of time that saw men innocent. Sin, like other things, receives growth by time, and improves by continuance ; and every succeeding age has the bad example of one age more than

the former. The same candle that refreshes when it is first lit, smells and offends when it is going out.

In the alphabet of nature, it is only the first letter that is flourished. In short, there is as much difference between the present and former times, as there is between a copy and an original; that indeed may be fair, but this only is authentic. And be a copy never so exact, yet still it shines with a borrowed perfection, and has but the low praise of an imitation: And this may be said in behalf of the former times.

But *Secondly*, for the pre-eminence of the succeeding ages above the former, it may be disputed thus.

If the honour be due to antiquity, then certainly the present age must claim it, for the world is now oldest, and therefore upon the very right of seniority may challenge precedency; for certainly, the longer the world lasts, the older it grows. And if wisdom ought to be respected, we know that it is the offspring of experience, and experience the child of age.

In every action, it is not the beginning, but the end that is regarded: It is still the issue that crowns the work, and the *amen* that seals the *petition*: The *plaudite* is given to the *last act*: And Christ reserved the *best wine* to conclude the *feast*; nay, a fair beginning would be but the aggravation of a bad end.

And if we plead original, we know that sin is strongest in its original; and we are taught whence to date that. The lightest things float at the top of time, but if there be such a thing as a golden age, its mass must needs sink it to the bottom and concluding ages of the world.

By having the histories of former ages, we have all their advantages by way of overplus, besides the proper advantages of our own; and so standing upon their shoulders, or rather upon their heads, cannot but have the further prospect.

Though the flourish begins the line, yet it is the period that makes the sins. As for the infirmities of age,

we confess that *men* grow decrepid by time, but *man-kind* does not. Policy, arts, and manufactures improve, and *nature itself*, as well as others, cannot be an artist, till it has *served its time*.

And, in religious matters, for the church, we know that it is *Christ's* body, and therefore its most natural, commending property is *growth*; and if it had had its greatest perfection at the first, *growth* would have been impossible.

Besides, we confess, that prophecy was a thing appropriate to the first days of the church: but then it is not *prophecy* spoken, but fulfilled; not the promise made but performed, which conveys the blessing; and though the giving of prophecies were the *glory* of the first times, yet their completion is the *privilege* of the latter.

But, do we not see all this while, that by thus ascribing the pre-eminence to former ages, we tacitly reflect upon the great Maker and Governor of the universe? for can Omnipotence be at a stand? is God exhausted? and is nature the only thing which makes no progress? God has made all things in motion, and the design of motion is a further perfection.

In sum, it was the fulness of time which brought *Christ* into the world; Christianity was a reserve for the *last*: And it was the beginning of time which was infamous for man's fall and ruin: So, in scripture, they are called the *last days* and the *ends of the world* which are ennobled with his redemption.

But, lastly, if the following ages were not the best, whence is it, that the older men grow, the more still they desire to live?—Now such things as these may be disputed in favour of the latter times beyond the former.

Having here brought the matter to this poise, to this equilibrium, that reflexive inquiry in the text concerning the worth of former times above the present, is eminently unreasonable in these two respects.

1. In respect of the nature of the thing itself ; which we have seen is equally propendent to both parts, and not discernable which way the balance inclines ; and nothing can be more irrational, than to be dogmatical in things doubtful ; and to determine where *wise* men only dispute.

2. In respect of the incompetence of any man living to be judge in this controversy : And he that is unfit to judge, I am sure, is unable to decide. Now that incompetence arises from this ; that no man can judge rightly of two things, but by comparing them together, and compare them he cannot unless he exactly knew them both. But how can he know former ages, unless, according to the opinion of *Plato* or *Pythagoras*, he might exist so many centuries before he was born ?

But you will reply, that he may know them by the histories of those that writ of their own times.

To this I answer, that history may be justly suspected partial ; and that historians report the virtues of their own age, selected and abstracted from the *vices* and *defects* ; and if sometimes they mention the vices also, (as they do,) yet they only report the smaller, that they may with less suspicion conceal the greater. Now it is an unequal comparison to compare the select virtues of one age, with both the virtues and the vices of another.

History, stript of partiality, would be a poor, thin, meagre thing, and the volume would shrink into the index. *I conclude therefore*, that he who would decide this controversy, by the historians of those times, first calls a man into question, and then makes him judge in his own cause, and at the best sees only by another's eyes.

III. Admitting this supposition as true, that the former ages are really the best, and to be preferred : Yet still this querulous reflection upon the evil of the present times, stands obnoxious to the same charge of folly ; and, if it be condemned also, upon this sup-

position, I see not where it can take sanctuary: Now that it ought to be so, I demonstrate by these reasons.

1. Because such complaints have no efficacy to remove the cause of them: Thoughts and words alter not the state of things. The expostulations of discontent are like a *thunder* without a *thunder-bolt*, they vanish into noise and nothing; and, like a woman, are only loud and weak.

States are not altered, nor governments changed, because one is discontented, and tells us so in a sermon, or in a book, and so prints himself a fool. Sad, undoubtedly, were our case, should God be angry with a nation, as often as a preacher is pleased to be passionate, and to call his distemper the word of God.

A quill is but a weak thing to contest with a scepter; and a satirical remonstrance to stand before a sword of justice. The laws will not be *worded* out of their course. The wheel will go on, though the fly sits, and flutters, and buzzes upon it.

It would be well, if such persons would take *Luther's* advice to *Melancthon*, and be persuaded to leave off to govern the world, and not to *frame* new *politic* ideas; not to raise *models of state*, and *holy commonwealths*, in their little *discontented* closets; nor to arraign a council before a conventicle; and being stript of their arms, to fly to revelation; and when they cannot *effect*, at least *prophecy* a change.

Though there be a lion, a bull, a venomous serpent, and a fiery scorpion in the *zodiac*; yet still the sun holds on his way, goes through them all, brings the year about, finishes his course, shines, and is glorious in spite of such opposition. The maunders of discontent are like the behaviour of a swine, who when he feels it rain, runs grumbling about, and, by that, indeed, discovers his nature, *but* does not avoid the storm.

2. Such complaints of the times are irrational, because they only quicken the smart and add to the

pressure. Such querulous invectives against a standing government, are like a stone flung at a marble pillar, which not only makes no impression upon that, but rebounds and hits the flinger in the face. Discontent *burns* only that breast in which it boils; and when it is not contented to be hot within, but must boil over in unruly, unwarrantable expressions to avoid the heat, it wisely takes refuge in the fire: Hence, when the sea swells and rages, we say not improperly, that the sea itself is troubled.

Submission is that which either removes or lightens the burden. Giving way either avoids or eludes the blow: And where an enemy, or an affliction, is too strong, patience is the best defiance.

And herein does the admirable wisdom of God appear, in modelling the great economy of the world, so uniting public and private advantages, that those dispositions of mind, that are most conducive to the safety of government and society, are also most advantageous to every man in his own personal capacity: For, does not an humble, compliant subjection at the same time strengthen the hands of the magistrate, and bless the person that has it with the privileges of quiet and content. He who has content, has that for which others would be great; he both secures and enjoys himself: but, on the contrary, he that frets and fumes, raises tumults abroad, and feels the same within; as he that cries and roars, first *hinders* his own sleep, before he breaks the rest of others: And it is not unusual to see a fire sometimes stifled in its own smoke.

In short, discontent is as laborious as useless; and he who will rebel must reckon upon the cost and conduct of an army, and endure the trouble of *watching*, as well as use the dissimulation of *praying*.

3. These censorious complaints of the evil of the times are irrational, because the just cause of them is resolvable into ourselves. 'Tis not the times that de-

bauch men, but men that derive a contagion upon the time : And it is still the liquor that first taints the vessel.

Time is harmless, it passes on, and meddles with none ; the sun rises, the year proceeds, and the seasons return, according to the decrees of nature and the inviolate constancy of a perpetual course. And is it not irrational for a man to cast the errors of his choice upon the necessity of fate ? or to complain that men *speak* low, because his hearing is decayed ? and to utter satires against those times which his own vice has made mad ? and, like *Amnon*, defile his sister, and then loath her for the wrong he did her.

Thus we use to say, it is the room that smokes, when indeed it is the fire which is in the room : And it is still the fault of the common banter or way of speaking, to disjoin the accusation and the crime, and to charge a land with the vices of its inhabitants.

But I should think, that it might not be so difficult a thing to find out a way both to remedy the complaint, and to remove the cause of it. For, let but the prodigal confine himself, and measure his expenses by his own abilities and not by another's books : Let him trust himself more, and others less : Let ministers cease to call faction religion, to lift up their voice too much like a trumpet, and in *petitions for peace*, declare for war : And let not others think themselves *wronged*, if they be not revenged : Let no man be forced to buy what he has already earned ; to pay for his wages, and to lay down new sums for the price of his blood and the just merit of his service. And then, certainly, there will be no cause to prefer *former ages* before the *present*. But if men will extravagantly plunge themselves in debt, and then rail of bad times, because they are arrested ; if the gallant will put all upon *his back*, and then exclaim against the government because he has nothing for his belly ; if men will think themselves bound to

præach the nation all on fire, and being stopped in their attempt, cry out of persecution ; if the public peace must be sacrificed to private revenge, certainly the complaint is impudent and brutish, and deserves to be sent to the law for an answer, and to the goal for satisfaction.

But it is a sure, though no new observation, that the most *obnoxious* are still the most *querulous* ; that discontent, and the cause of it, are generally from the same person ; and that when once the remorse of guilt improve into discontent, it is not less difficult to make such persons contented than to make them innocent.

Rigor and contempt are the best correctors of this distemper. And he who thinks that such persons may be pacified, may as well attempt to satisfy the bottomless pit, the cravings of hell, or the appetites of the grave, which may sooner be *filled* (as impossible as that is) than be *satisfied*.

For where interests are contradictory, (as in all companies of men some must needs be,) there an universal satisfaction is just in the same measure possible, in which contradictions are reconcilable. And doubtless there have been those, who have heartily cursed that rain or sunshine, for which others have as heartily prayed.

Even our blessed Saviour himself, we read, *endured the contradiction of sinners* : And (be it spoke with reverence) it would put Providence itself to a kind of non-plus, to attemper any dispensation of it to an universal acceptance ; any more than that glorious fountain of light, the sun, can shine upon all the corners of the earth at once : Wherefore, since the distemper (we speak of) is incorrigible, and the remedy deplorable, let not bare *power* attempt to outdo *Omnipotence* ; nor the *gods of the earth* (as they are called) think to do that which the *God of heaven* has never yet thought fit to effect.

SELECTIONS
FROM
VARIOUS DISCOURSES.

44

DISCOURSE I.

ALL CONTINGENCIES DIRECTED BY GOD'S PROVIDENCE.
Prov. xvi. 33.

* * * * *

MANY passages happen in the world, much like that *little cloud* (1 *Kings* xviii.), that appeared at first to *Elijah's* servant, *no bigger than a man's hand*, but presently after grew and spread, and blackened the face of the whole heaven, and then discharged itself in thunder and rain, and a mighty tempest. So these accidents, when they first happen, seem but small and contemptible; but by degrees they branch out into such a numerous train of mischievous consequences, one drawing after it another, by a continued dependence and multiplication, that the plague becomes universal, and personal miscarriage determines in a national calamity.

For who, that should view the despicable beginnings of some things and persons at first, could imagine or prognosticate those stupendous increases of fortune, that have afterwards followed them?

Who, that had looked upon *Agathocles* first handling the clay, and making pots under his father, and afterwards turning robber, could have thought, that from such a condition, he should come to be king of *Sicily*?

Who, that had seen *Massanello*, a poor fisherman, with his red cap and his angle, could have reckoned it possible to see such a pitiful thing, within a week after, shining in his cloth of gold, and with a word; or

a nod, absolutely commanding the whole city of *Naples*?

And who, that had beheld such a bankrupt, beggarly fellow as *Cromwell*, first entering the parliament-house with a thread-bare, torn cloak and a greasy hat, (and perhaps neither of them paid for,) could have suspected, that, in the space of so few years, he should, by the murder of one king, and the banishment of another, ascend the throne, be invested in the royal robes, and want nothing of the state of a king, but the changing of his hat into a crown.*

* * * * *

God has many ways to reap down the grandees of the earth ; an arrow, a bullet, a tyle, a stone from an house, is an enough to do it : And besides all these ways, sometimes, when he intends to bereave the world of a prince, or an illustrious person, he may cast him upon a bold, self-opinioned physician, worse than his distemper, who shall dose and bleed, and kill him, *secundùm artem*, and make a shift to cure him into his grave.

* * * * *

Then also for men's reputation, and that either in point of wisdom, or of wit ; there is hardly any thing which (for the most part) falls under a greater chance. If a man succeeds in any attempt, though undertook with never so much folly and rashness, his success shall vouch him a politician ; and good luck shall pass for deep contrivance : For give any one fortune, and he shall be thought a wise man, in spite of his heart, nay, and of his head too. On the contrary, be a design never so artificially laid, and spun in the finest thread of policy, if it chances to be defeated by some cross accident, the man is then run down by an universal vogue.

[* This sally of wit is reported to have caused such a fit of merriment in Charles II. before whom the discourse was delivered, that, turning to Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, he said, with his usual exclamation, "Ods fish, Lory, your chaplain must be made a bishop ; so put me in mind of him at the next death."—ED.]

Ahithophel was as great an *oracle*, and gave as good counsel to *Absalom*, as ever he had given to *David*; but not having the good luck to be believed, and thereupon losing his former repute, he thought it high time to hang himself. And, on the other side, there have been some, who for several years have been fools with tolerable good reputation, and never discovered themselves to be so, till at length they attempted to be knaves also, but wanted art and dexterity.

And as the repute of wisdom, so that of wit also, is very casual. Sometimes a lucky saying, or a pertinent reply, has procured an esteem of wit, to persons no ways accustomed to utter such things by any standing ability of mind; so that if such an one should have the ill hap at any time to strike a man dead with a smart saying, it ought, in all reason, to be judged but a chance-medley; the poor man (God knows) being no way guilty of any design of wit.

Nay, even where there is a real stock of wit, yet the wittiest sayings and sentences will be found in a great measure the issues of chance, and nothing else, but so many lucky hits of a roving fancy.

For consult the acutest poets and speakers, and they will confess that their quickest and most admired conceptions, were such as darted into their minds like sudden flashes of lightning, they knew not how, nor whence; and not by any certain dependence of one thought upon another, as in matters of ratiocination.

Moreover, sometimes a man's reputation rises or falls, as his memory serves him in a performance; and yet there is nothing more slippery, and less under command, than this faculty. So that many having used their utmost diligence to secure a faithful retention of the things or words committed to it, yet after all cannot certainly know where it will trip and fail them. Any sudden diversion of the spirits, or the justling in of a transient thought, is able to deface those little images of things; and so breaking the train that was

laid in the mind, to leave a man in the lurch. And for the other part of memory, called reminiscence, which is the retrieving of a thing, at present forgot, or but confusedly remembered, by setting the mind to hunt over all its notions, and to ransack every little cell of the brain. While it is thus busied, how accidentally oftentimes does the thing sought for, offer itself to the mind? And by what small, petit hints does the mind catch hold of, and recover a vanishing notion?

In short, though wit and learning are certain and habitual perfections of the mind, yet the declaration of them (which alone brings the repute) is subject to a thousand hazards. So that every wit runs something the same risk with the astrologer, who, if his predictions come to pass, is cried up to the *stars*, from whence he pretends to draw them; but if not, the astrologer himself grows more out of date than his almanack.

* * * * *

As for men's employments and preferments, every man that sets forth into the world, comes into a great lottery, and draws some one certain profession to act and live by, but knows not the fortune that will attend him in it.

One man perhaps proves miserable in the study of the law, which might have flourished in that of physic or divinity. Another runs his head against the pulpit, who might have been very serviceable to his country at the plough. And a third proves a very dull and heavy philosopher, who possibly would have made a good mechanic, and have done well enough at the *useful philosophy* of the *spade*, or the *anvil*.

* * * * *

Cæsar Borgia (base son to Pope *Alexander VI.*) used to boast to his friend *Machiavel*, that he had contrived his affairs and greatness into such a posture of firmness, that whether his holy father lived or died,

they could not but be secure. If he lived, there could be no doubt of them ; and if he died, he laid his interest so, as to over-rule the next election as he pleased. But all this while, the politician never considered, that he might in the mean time fall dangerously sick, and that sickness necessitate his removal from the court, and during that his absence, his father die, and so his interest decay, and his mortal enemy be chosen to the papacy, as indeed it fell out. So that for all his exact plot, down was he cast from all his greatness, and forced to end his days in a mean condition ; as it is pity but all such politic opiniators should.

Upon much the like account, we find it once said of an eminent cardinal, by reason of his great likelihood to step into St. *Peter's* chair, that in two conclaves he went in Pope, and came out again cardinal.

So much has chance the casting-voice in the disposal of all the great things of the world. That which men call *merit*, is a mere *nothing*. For even when persons of the greatest worth and merit are preferred, it is not their merit, but their fortune that prefers them. And then, for that other so much admired thing called *policy*, it is but little better. For when men have busied themselves, and beat their brains never so much, the whole result both of their counsels and their fortunes, is still at the mercy of an accident. And therefore, whosoever that man was, that said, that he had rather have a grain of fortune, than a pound of wisdom, as to the things of this life, spoke nothing but the voice of wisdom and great experience.

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The sun shines in his full brightness, but the very moment before he passes under a cloud. Who knows what a day, what an hour, nay, what a minute may bring forth ! He who builds upon the present, builds upon the narrow compass of a point ; and where the foundation is so *narrow*, the superstructure cannot be high, and strong too.

DISCOURSE II.

OF THE LIGHT WITHIN US.—*Luke xi. 35.*

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And *First, for Lust*: Nothing does or can darken the conscience of man more: nay, it has a peculiar efficacy this way, and for that cause may justly be ranked amongst the very *powers of darkness*: it being that which, (as naturalists observe,) strikes at the proper seat of the understanding, the brain. Something of that *blackness of darkness* mentioned in *St. Jude*, seeming to be of the very nature, as well as *punishment* of this vice.

Nor does only the *reason*, of the thing itself, but also the *examples* of such as have been possessed with it, demonstrate as much.

For had not *Sampson* (think we) an intolerable darkness and confusion upon his understanding, while he ran roving after every strumpet in that brutish manner that he did? Was it not the eye of his conscience which his *Delilah* first put out, and so of a Judge of *Israel*, rendered himself really a judgment upon them? And when the two angels (*Gen. xix.*) struck those monsters, the men of *Sodom*, with *blindness*, had not their own detestable lust first stricken them with a greater? Or could *Herod* have ever thought himself obliged by the religion of an *oath*, to have murdered the *Baptist*, had not his lust, and his *Herodias imprisoned and murdered* his conscience first? For, surely,

the *common light of nature*, could not but teach him that no *vow* whatsoever could warrant the greatest prince upon earth to take away the life of an innocent person. But it seems his besotted conscience having broken through the *seventh commandment*, the *sixth* stood too near it to be safe long: And therefore his two great casuists, the *Devil* and his *Herodias* (the worse devil of the two) having allowed him to wallow in *adultery* so long, easily persuaded him that the same *salvo* might be found out for *murder* also. So that it was his *lust* obstinately continued in, which thus deluded his conscience; and the same will, no doubt, *darken*, and *delude*, and, in the end, *extinguish* the conscience of any man breathing, who shall surrender himself up to it. The *light within him* shall grow every day less and less, and at length totally go out, and that in a *stink* too. So utterly unfeasible is it for men to be zealous votaries of the *blind god*, without losing *their eyes* in his service, and it is well if their noses do not follow. From all which it appears, what a *paradox* it is in *morals*, for any one under the dominion of his lust, to think to have a right judgment in things relating to the state of his soul.

* * * * *

Gluttony and all excess, either in eating or drinking, strangely clouds the intellectual powers; and then, it is not to be expected that the *conscience* should bear up, when the *understanding* is drunk down. An *epicure's practice* naturally disposes a man to an *epicure's principles*; that is, to an equal looseness in both: And he who makes his *belly* his business, will quickly come to have a *conscience* of as large a swallow as his *throat*; of which there want not several scandalous and deplorable instances. Loads of meat and drink are fit for none but a *beast of burden to bear*; and he is much the greater beast of the two, who carries his burden in his *belly*, than he who carries it upon his *back*. On the contrary, nothing is so great a friend to the

mind of man as *abstinence*; it strengthens the *memory*, it clears the *apprehension*, and sharpens the *judgment*, and in a word, gives reason its full scope of acting; and when reason has that, it is always a diligent and faithful handmaid to *conscience*. * * * *

Who hath woe? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? says Solomon, (*Prov. xxiii. 29.*) Which question he himself presently answers in the next verse: *They who tarry long at the wine, they who seek after mixt wine.* So say I, who has a stupid intellect, a broken memory, and a blasted wit; and (worse than all) a *blind, benighted conscience*, but the *intemperate* and *luxurious*, the *epicure* and the *smell-feast*? So impossible is it for a man to turn *sot*, without making himself a *blockhead* too. I know, this is not always the present effect of these courses, but, at a long run, it will infallibly be so; and *time* and *luxury* together, will as certainly change the *inside*, as it does the *outside* of the best *heads* whatsoever; and much more of such heads as are *strong* for nothing but to *bear drink*: concerning which, it ever was, and is, and will be a sure observation, that such as are *ablest at the barrel*, are generally *weakest at the book*.

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Of all the vices incident to human nature, none so powerfully and peculiarly carries the soul downwards as *Covetousness* does. It makes it all earth and dirt, *burying* that noble thing which can never *die*.

How mightily this vice *darkens* and *debases* the mind, scripture-instances do abundantly shew. When Moses would assign the proper qualifications of a Judge, which office certainly calls for the quickest apprehension, and the solidest judgment that the mind of man is well capable of, (*Deut. xvi. 9.*) *Thou shalt not take a gift*, (says he.) But why? He presently adds the reason; *Because a gift blinds the eyes of the wise.*

And no wonder, for it perverts their will ; and then, *who so blind as the man who resolves not to see ?* Gold, it seems, being but a very bad help and cure of the eyes in such cases. In like manner, when Samuel would set the credit of his integrity clear above all the aspersions of envy and calumny itself, (1 Sam. xii. 3.) *Of whose hands have I received a bribe to blind my eyes therewith ?* (says he.) Implying thereby, that for a man to be *gripe-handed* and *clear-sighted* too, was impossible.

For, the truth is, preach to the conscience of a covetous person (if he may be said to have any) with the tongue of men and angels, and tell him of the vanity of the world, of treasure in heaven, and of the necessity of being rich towards God, and liberal to his poor brother ; and 'tis all but flat, insipid, and ridiculous stuff to him, who neither sees, nor feels, nor suffers any thing to pass into his heart, but through his hands. You must preach to such an one of bargain and sale, profits and perquisites, principal and interest, use upon use ; and if you can persuade him that godliness is gain in his own sense, perhaps you may do something with him ; otherwise, though you edge every word you speak with reason and religion, evidence and demonstration, you shall never affect, nor so much as reach his conscience ; for it is kept sealed up in a bag under lock and key, and and you cannot come at it.

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As covetousness dulls the mind by pressing it down too much below itself, so Ambition dazzles it by lifting it up as much above itself ; but both of them are sure to darken the light of it. For if you either look too intently down a deep precipice upon a thing at an extreme distance below you, or with the same earnestness fix your eye upon something at too great an height above you ; in both cases you will find a vertigo or giddiness. And where there is a giddiness in the

head, there will be always a *mist before the eyes*. And thus, no doubt, it was only an ambitious aspiring after high things, which not long since caused such a woful, scandalous *giddiness* in some men's consciences, and made them turn *round and round* from *this to that*, and *from that to this*, till at length they knew not what bottom to fix upon.

Pride, we know, (which is always cousin-german to *ambition*,) is commonly reckoned the *fore-runner of a fall*. It was the *devil's sin* and the *devil's ruin*, and has been ever since the *devil's stratagem*; who, like an expert *wrestler*, usually gives a man a *lift* before he gives him a *throw*. But how does he do this? Why, by first blinding him with *ambition*; and when a man either cannot, or will not mind the *ground he stands upon*, as a thing (forsooth) *too much below him*, he is then easily jostled down, and thrust headlong into the next ditch. The truth is, in this case men seem to ascend to an *high station*, just as they use to leap down a very great steep: In both cases they shut their eyes first, for in both the danger is very dreadful, and the way to venture upon it is *not to see it*.

Yea, so fatally does this towering humour intoxicate men's minds, that when the devil stands *bobbing* and *tantalizing* their gaping hopes with some preferment in *church* or *state*, they shall do the vilest and most odious things imaginable; and that not only in defiance of conscience, but, which is yet more impudent and intolerable, shall even allege conscience itself as the very reason for the doing them: So that such wretches shall, out of *mere conscience*, (forsooth,) betray the country that bred, and the church that baptized them, and having first practised a *dispensing power* upon all *law within them*, shall help to let the same loose upon all *laws without them* too; and when they have done, shall wipe their mouths, and with as *boon a grace* and as *bold a front* look the world in the face, as if they expected *thanks* for such villanies, as a modest malefactor would scarce presume to expect a *pardon* for.

* * * * *

There are many more irregular and corrupt affections belonging to the mind of man, and all of them in their degree apt to darken and obscure the *light of conscience*. But the three forementioned are, doubtless, the most *potent* in their influence, and most *pernicious* in their effect; as answering to those three principal objects, which, of all others, do the most absolutely *command* and *domineer* over the desires of men; to wit, the *pleasures* of the world working upon their *sensuality*; the profits of the world, upon their *covetousness*; and lastly the *honours* of it, upon their *ambition*. Which three powerful *incentives*, meeting with these three violent *affections*, are, as it were, the great *trident* in the tempter's hand, by which he strikes through the very souls of men; or as a mighty *three-fold cord*, by which he first hampers, and then draws the whole after him, and that with such an irresistible fascination upon the understandings, as well as appetites of men, that as God said heretofore, *Let there be light, and there was light*; so this proud rival of his Creator is still saying in defiance of him, *Let there be darkness*, and accordingly *there is darkness*; *darkness* upon the mind and reason; *darkness* upon the judgment and conscience of all mankind. So that *hell* itself seems to be nothing else, but the devil's finishing this his great work, and the consummation of that *darkness* in another world, which he had so fatally begun in this.

DISCOURSE III.

THE WISDOM OF GOD IN THE GOSPEL MYSTERY.

1 Cor. ii. 7.

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THE *Socinians* indeed, who would obtrude upon the world a new Christianity of their own inventing, will admit of nothing in this religion, which the natural reason of man cannot have a clear, comprehensive perception of; and this not only in defiance of the express words of *scripture*, but also of the constant sense of all antiquity unanimously confessing an incomprehensibility in many of the articles of the *christian faith*. So that these bold persons stand alone by themselves, upon a new bottom, and an upstart principle, not much above an hundred years old, spitting upon all antiquity before them; and (as some, who have wrote against them, have well observed of them) are the only sect of men in the world, who ever pretended to set up or own a religion without either a *mystery* or a *sacrifice* belonging to it. And now, are not these blessed *new lights* (think we) fit to be encouraged, courted, and have panegyrics made upon their wonderful abilities, forsooth? Whilst they, on the other side, are employing the utmost of those abilities (such as they are) in blaspheming our Saviour, and overturning our religion? But *this is their hour, and the power of darkness*. For it is a truth too manifest to be denied, *that* there have been more *innovations* upon, and *blasphemies* against the chief articles of our *faith*, published in this kingdom, and that after a more audacious and scandalous manner, within these *several years last past*, than

have been known here for some centuries of years before (even those times of confusion both in church and state betwixt *Forty-one* and *Sixty* not excepted :) And what this may end in, God only at present knows, and I wish the whole nation *may not at length feel*.

* * * * *

To protect which [religion] from the sawcy encroachments of bold minds, he has hedged it in with a majestic obscurity, in some of the principal parts of it ; which, that it is the most effectual way to secure a reverence to it from such minds, is as certain as the universal experience of mankind can make it ; it being an observation too frequent to be at all doubted of, *that familiarity breeds contempt* ; and it holds not more in point of *converse*, than in point of knowledge.

Distance preserves respect, and we still imagine some transcendant worth in things above our reach. *Moses* was never more revered than when he wore his *veil*. Nay, the very *sanctum sanctorum* would not have had such a veneration from the *Jews*, had they been permitted to enter into it, and to gaze and stare upon it, as often as they did upon the other parts of the temple. The *high priest* himself, who alone was suffered to enter into it, yet was to do so *but once a year* ; lest the frequency of the sight might insensibly lessen *that adoration*, which so sacred a thing was still to maintain upon his thoughts.

Many men, who in their *absence* have been admirable for their fame, find a diminution of that respect upon their personal *presence* : Even the great apostle *St. Paul* himself found it so. And upon the same account it is, that the kings of some nations, to keep up a living and a constant awe of themselves in the minds of their subjects, show themselves to them but once a year : And even that perhaps may be something with the oftenest, considering, that persons, whose greatness generally consists rather in the *height* of their condition, than in the *depth* of their understand-

ing, seldom appear freely and openly, but they *expose* themselves in more senses than one.

It is not the *worth* or *excellency*, but the *strangeness* of a thing which draws the eyes and admiration of men after it: For can any thing in nature be imagined more glorious than the *sun* shining in his full might, and yet how many more spectators and wonderers does the same *sun* find under an eclipse?

But to pursue this notion yet further, it will not be amiss to consider, how it has been the custom of all the wise nations of the world still to *reserve* the *great rites* of their religion *in occulto*: Thus, how studiously did the *Egyptians*, those great masters of all *learning*, lock up their sacred things from all access of the vulgar! Whereupon their gods were pictured with their *finger* upon their *mouth*, thereby (as it were) enjoining *silence* to their votaries, and forbidding all publication of their *mysteries*. Nor was this all, but for the better concealing of the *sacra arcana* of their religion, they used also a *peculiar character* unknown to the common people, and understood only by themselves; and last of all, the *priesthood* was made *hereditary* amongst them, by which means they easily confined the knowledge of their *sacerdotal rites* wholly within their own family. The like also is reported of the *Phœnicians*, the *Babylonians*, and the *Grecians*, that they had their *sacred* and peculiar way of writing, by which they rescued the *reverend mysteries* of their religion from the rude inspection of the rout. And lastly, that the same course of secrecy was also followed by the *Romans*, though in a different way, and not by the use of such peculiar characters, is sufficiently evident, from that known *prologue* to their *sacred rites*, *Procul este profani*.

* * * * *

The pride and haughtiness of man's reason is a quality so peculiarly odious to God, that it may be said, not so much to imprint upon men the *image*, as

to communicate to them the very *essence of Lucifer*. The way by which man first fell from his original integrity and happiness was by *pride*, founded upon an irregular *desire of knowledge*; and therefore it seems to be a course most agreeable to the divine wisdom to contrive man's *recovery* by such a method as should abase him in that very perfection, whereof the ambitious improvement first cast him down from that glorious condition. In short, *man would be like God in knowledge*, and so he fell; and now if he will be like *him in happiness* too, God will effect it in such a way, as shall convince him to his face that he *knows nothing*. The whole course of his salvation shall be all *riddle and mystery* to him; he shall (as I may so express it) *be carried up to heaven in a cloud*. Instead of *evidence* springing from things themselves, and clear knowledge growing from such an *evidence*, his understanding must now be contented with the poor, dim *light of faith*, which (as I have shown) guides only in the *strength and light* of another's knowledge, and is properly a *seeing with another's eyes*.

* * * * *

We learn from what has been discoursed, the great *vanity* and *presumption* of such as *pretend to clear up all mysteries, and determine all controversies in religion*. The attempts of which sort of men I can liken to nothing so properly as to those pretences to *infallible cures*, which we daily see posted up in every corner of the streets; and I think it is great pity, but that both these sort of pretences were *posted up together*. For I know no universal, infallible remedy, which certainly *cures*, or rather *carries off all diseases*, and puts an end to all disputes, but death; which yet, for all that, is a remedy not much in request. Quacks and mountebanks are, doubtless, a very dangerous sort of men in physic, but much more so in divinity.

There is hardly a greater, and more undecidable *problem in natural theology*, and which has not only

exercised, but even crucified the greatest wits of all ages, than the reconciling of the *immutable certainty of God's foreknowledge* with the *freedom and contingency* of all human acts. Both parts of which problem are certainly true, but how to make out the accord between them without overthrowing one of them, has hitherto exceeded the force of man's reason. And therefore *Sacinus* very roundly, or rather indeed very profanely, denies any such *prescience of future contingents* to be in God at all. But as *profane* as he was in thus cutting asunder this knot, others have been as *ridiculous* in pretending to untie it. For do not some, in their discourses about the *divine attributes* and *decrees*, promise the world such an open, explicit scheme of those great things, as should make them *evident even, to the meanest capacities?* And the truth is, if to any capacities at all, it must be to the *meanest*; for to those of an higher pitch, and a larger compass, these things neither are, nor will, nor ever can be made evident. And if such persons could but obtain of heaven a continuance of life, till they made good what they so confidently undertake, they would be in a sure way to out-live not only *Methuselah*, but even the *world* itself. But then, in come some other *undertakers*, and promise us the same or greater wonders in *christian theology*, offering by some new whimsical explanations of their own to make the *deepest mysteries* of our christian faith as *easy* and *intelligible* (forsooth) as that two and two make four; that is, in other words, they will render them such *mysteries* as shall have nothing at all *mystical* in them.

And now is not this, think we, a most profound invention, and much like the discovery of some *New-found land*, some *O Brazil* in divinity? with so much absurd confidence do some discourse or rather *romance* upon the most *mysterious points* of the *christian faith*; that any man of sense and sobriety would be apt to think such persons not only *beside* their subject, but *beside themselves* too.

DISCOURSE IV.

PROSPERITY FATAL TO VIRTUE.—*Prov. i. 32.*

* * * * *

Poverty and hardship has made the most famed commanders, the fittest persons for business, the most expert statesmen, and the greatest philosophers. But would the young effeminate gallant, that never knew what it was to want his will, that every day swims in the delights of the world : would he, I say, choose to rise out of his soft bed at midnight, to begin an hard and a long march, to engage in a crabbed study, or to follow some tedious perplexed business ? No, he will have his servants, and the sun itself *rise before him* ; when his breakfast is ready, he will make himself ready too ; unless perhaps sometimes his hounds and his huntsmen break his sleep, and so make him *early* in order to his being *idle*.

Hence we observe so many great families to moulder away through the sottishness of the heir : the reason of which is, that the possession of an estate does not prompt men to those severe practices, by which it was first acquired. The grand-child perhaps comes and drinks, and whores himself out of those fair lands, manors and mansions, which his glorious ancestors had fought, or studied themselves into, which they had got by preserving their country against an invasion, by facing the enemy in the field, hungry and thirsty, early and late, by preferring a brave action before a sound sleep, though nature might never so much require it.

When the courage of the *Romans* had made them

masters of the wealth and pleasures of all the conquered nations round about them, we see how quickly the edge of their valour was dulled, and the rigorous honesty of their morals melted away with those delights, which too easily circumvent and overcome the hearts of men. So that instead of the *Camilli*, the *Fabricii*, the *Scipios*, and such like propagators of the growing greatness of the *Roman* empire, who lived as high things as they performed; as soon as the bulk of it grew vast and unlimited upon the reign of *Augustus Cæsar*, we find a degenerate race of *Caligulas*, *Neros* and *Vitelliuses*; and of other inferior sycophants, who neither knew nor affected any way of making themselves considerable, but by a servile adoring of the vices and follies of great ones above them, and a base treacherous informing against virtuous and brave persons about them.

The whole business that was carried on with such noise and eagerness in that great city, then the empress of the western world, was nothing else but to build magnificently, to feed luxuriously, to frequent sports and theatres, to run *for the sportula*, and in a word, to flatter, and be flattered; the effects of a too full and unwieldy prosperity. But surely they could not have had leisure to think upon their *sumens*, their *mullets*, their *Lucrinian oysters*, their *phænicopters*, and the like; they could not have made a rendezvous of all the elements at their table every day, in such a prodigious variety of meats and drinks; they could not, I say, have thus attended these things, had the *Gauls* been besieging their *capitol*, or *Hannibal* at the head of his *Carthaginian* army *rapping at their doors*: this would quickly have turned their *spits* into *swords*; and whet their teeth too against their enemies. But when peace, ease and plenty, took away these whetstones of courage and emulation, they insensibly slid into the *Asiatic* softness, and were intent upon nothing but their *cooks*, and their ragouts, their fine attendants, and

unusual habits ; so that the *Roman* genius was, (as the *English* seems to be now) even stifled, and the conquerors themselves transformed into the guise and garb of the conquered ; till by degrees the empire shrivelled away ; and from such a *surfeit* of immoderate prosperity, passed at length into a final *consumption*.

* * * * *

Those vices which more particularly receive improvement by prosperity.

1. And the first is *Pride*. Who almost is there, whose heart does not *swell* with his *bag* ? and whose thoughts do not follow the proportions of his condition ? What difference has been seen in the same man poor and preferred ? His mind, like a mushroom, has shot up in a night. His business is first to forget himself, and then his friends. When the sun shines, then the peacock displays his train.

We know when *Hezekiah's* treasures were full, his armories replenished, and the pomp of his court rich and splendid, how his heart was lifted up, and what vaunts he made of all to the *Babylonish* ambassadors, (*Isa.* xxix. 2.) Though in the end, as most proud fools do, he smarted for his ostentation. See *Nebuchadnezzar* also strutting himself upon the survey of that mass of riches, and settled grandeur, that Providence had blessed his court with. It swelled his heart till it broke out at his mouth in that rhodomontade, *Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the glory of my majesty ?* Now, that prosperity, by fomenting a man's pride, lays a certain train for his ruin, will easily be acknowledged by him, who either from scripture or experience shall learn what a spite Providence constantly owes the *proud person*. He is the very eye-sore of heaven ; and God even looks upon his own supremacy as concerned to abase him.

2. Another sin that is apt to receive increase and growth from prosperity, is *Luxury and uncleanness*.

Sodom was a place watered like the garden of God, and what the sin of it was, and the dismal consequence of that sin, is too well known. The *Israelites* committing fornication with the daughters of *Moab*, which reaped down so many thousands of them at once, was introduced with feasting and dancing, and all the gaieties and festivities of a prosperous, triumphing people. We read of nothing like adultery in a persecuted *David* in the wilderness; he fled here and there like a chaste roe upon the mountains, but when the delicacies of the court softened and ungirt his spirit, when he drowzed upon his couch, and sunned himself upon the leads of his palace; then it was that this great hero fell by a glance, and buried his glories in his neighbour's bed; gaining to his name a lasting slur, and to his conscience a fearful wound.

As *Solomon* says of a man surprized with surfeit and intemperance, we may say of every foolish man immersed in prosperity, *that his eyes shall look upon strange women, and his heart shall utter perverse things.* 'Tis a tempting thing for the fool to be gadding abroad in a fair day. But *Dinah* knows not, but the snare may be laid for her, and she return with a rape upon her honour, baffled and deflowered, and robbed of the crown of her virginity. *Lot's* daughters revelled and banqueted their father into incest.

The unclean devil haunts the families of the rich, the gallant, and the high livers; and there is nothing but the wisdom from above which descends upon strict, humble, and praying persons, that can preserve the soul pure in the killing neighbourhood of such a contagion.

* * * * *

Prosperity, I shewed, was destructive to fools: and therefore, the only way for a man not to find it destructive, is for him not to be a fool; and this he may avoid by a pious observance of these following rules. As

1. Let him seriously consider upon what weak hin-

ges his prosperity and felicity hang. Perhaps the cross falling of a little accident, the omission of a ceremony, or the misplacing of a circumstance, may determine all his fortunes for ever. Or perhaps his whole interest, his possessions, and his hopes too, may live by the breath of another, who may breathe his last to-morrow. And shall a man forget God and eternity, for that which cannot secure him the reversion of a day's happiness? Can any favourite bear himself high and insolent upon the stock of the largest fortune imaginable, who has read the story of *Wolsey* or *Sejanus*? Not only the *death*, but the *humour* of his prince or patron may divest him of all his glories, and send him stripped and naked to his long rest. He that well considers this, will account it a surer livelihood to depend upon the *sweat* of his own *brow*, than the *favour* of another man's.

2. Let a man consider, how little he is bettered by prosperity as to those perfections which are chiefly valuable. All the wealth of both the *Indies* cannot add one cubit to the stature either of his body or his mind. It can neither better his health, advance his intellects, or refine his morals. We see those languish and die, who command the physic and physicians of a whole kingdom. And some are dunces in the midst of libraries, dull and sottish in the very bosom of *Athens*; and far from wisdom, though they lord it over the wise.

DISCOURSE V.

THE VANITY OF GOOD INTENTIONS MERELY.

1 Cor. viii. 12.

* * * * *

I look upon the old *church* of *England royalists* (which I take to be only another name for a man who prefers his conscience before his interest) to be the best Christians, and the most meritorious subjects in the world ; as having passed all those terrible tests, which domineering malice could put them to, and carried their credit and their conscience clear and triumphant through, constantly firm and immoveable, by all that they felt either from their professed enemies, or their false friends.

* * * * *

It is wonderful to consider, how a command, or call to be liberal, either upon a civil or religious account, all of a sudden impoverishes the rich, breaks the merchant, shuts up every private man's exchequer, and makes those men in a minute have nothing at all to give, who, at the very same instant, want nothing to spend. So that instead of relieving the poor, such a command strangely increases their number, and transforms rich men into beggars presently. For, let the danger of their prince and country knock at their purses, and call upon them to contribute against a public enemy or calamity ; then immediately they have nothing, and their riches, upon such occasions, (as *Solomon* expresses it,) never fail to *make themselves wings, and to fly away.*

* * * * *

Come to an old, rich, professing *volpone*, and tell him, that there is a church to be built, beautified, or endowed in such a place, and that he cannot lay out his money more to God's honour, the public good, and the comfort of his own conscience, than to bestow it liberally upon such an occasion ; and in answer to this, it is ten to one but you shall be told, "*How much* God is for the inward, spiritual worship of the heart, and that the Almighty neither dwells, nor delights in temples made with hands ; but hears and accepts the prayers of his people in dens and caves, barns and stables ; and in the homeliest and meanest cottages, as well as in the stateliest and most magnificent *churches*." Thus, I say, you are like to be answered. In reply to which, I would have all such sly, sanctified cheats (who are so often harping upon this string) know once for all, that that God who accepts the prayers of his people in dens and caves, barns and stables, when, by his afflicting Providence, he has driven them from the appointed places of his solemn worship, so that they cannot have the use of them, will not, for all this, endure to be served, or prayed to by them in such places, nor accept of their barn-worship ; no, nor yet of their parlour, or their chamber worship, where he has given them both wealth and power to build him churches. For he that commands us to *worship him in the spirit*, commands us also to *honour him with our substance*. For, as in the heathen worship of God, a *sacrifice without an heart*, was accounted *ominous* ; so in the christian worship of him, an *heart without a sacrifice* is worthless and impertinent.

* * * * *

Come we now to this old, rich pretender to godliness, in another case, and tell him *that* there is such an one, a man of a good family, good education, and who has lost all his estate for the king, now ready to rot in prison for debt ; come, what will you give towards his

release? *Why*, then answers the *will* instead of the *deed*, as much the readier *speaker* of the two, "The truth is, I always had a respect for such men; I love them with all my heart; and it is a thousand pities that any that have served the king so faithfully, should be in such *want*." So say I too, and the more shame is it for the whole nation, that they should be so. But still, what will you give? *Why*, then answers the man of mouth-charity again, and tells you, that "*you could not come in a worse time*; that money is now-a-days very scarce with him, and that therefore he can give nothing; but he will be sure to *pray for the poor gentleman*."

Ah thou hypocrite! when thy brother has lost all that ever he had, and lies languishing, and even gasping under the utmost extremities of poverty and distress, dost thou think thus to lick him whole again, only with thy tongue? Just like that old formal hocus, who denied a beggar a farthing, and put him off with his blessing.

The measures that God marks out to thy charity, are these: Thy superfluities must give place to thy neighbour's great convenience: Thy convenience must vail to thy neighbour's necessity: And lastly, thy very necessities must yield to thy neighbour's extremity.

This is the gradual process that must be thy rule; and he that pretends a disability to give, short of this, prevaricates with his duty. God sometimes calls upon thee to relieve the needs of thy poor brother, sometimes of thy country, and sometimes of thy prince: Now, before thou flyest to the old, stale, usual pretence, that thou canst do none of all these things, consider with thyself, that there is a God, who is not to be flammed off with lies, who knows exactly what thou canst do, and what thou canst not; and consider in the next place, that it is not the best husbandry in the world, to be damned to save charges.

DISCOURSE VI.

THE PROTECTION OF KINGS, THE PECULIAR CARE OF PROVIDENCE.—*Ps. cxliv. 10.*

* * * * *

God does *after an extraordinary manner* deliver Princes, by endowing them with a more than ordinary sagacity and quickness of understanding. Kings, they say, have a long reach with their arm; but they have a further with their mind. God is said (*1 Kings iv. 29,*) to have given *Solomon largeness of heart; even as the sand on the sea-shore.* And (*Prov. xv. 5,*) *The heart of Kings is said to be unsearchable.* In the former text the royal mind is compared to the sand on the sea-shore for *compass*, and in this latter it may seem to vie with the sea itself for *depth*. And does not this day's solemnity give us an eminent proof of this? For when this horrid conspiracy, contrived in hell and darkness, was conveyed to one of the confederates under the shelter of an equivocal writing, our apprehensive and quick-scented king presently smoked the ambiguous paper, and sounding the depths of the black intrigue, found that at the bottom of it, which few mortals besides (though of the quickest faculties) could have discovered from it; who had not had their conjectures alarmed by some glimmerings of light into that dark project before. Such a piercing judgment does God often give to these his deputies. A judgment which looks *into*, or rather *through* and *through* all others, but is *looked* into by none.

And there is nothing that both adorns and secures a prince, comparably to this discerning faculty: for by this, as by a great light kindling many others, he com-

mands the use of the best understandings and judgments throughout his dominions, calling them to his council, and so seeing with their eyes, apprehending and contriving with their heads; all their knowledge and experience, like rivers paying tribute to the ocean, being conveyed into and swallowed up in his royal breast. It is both the safety and felicity of a prince to have a wise council, but it must be his own *wisdom* which provides him one. Wisdom is a noble quality, and not discernible but by itself. It is art that must judge of art; and he who discovers wisdom in another, must do it by the idea he first had of it in his own brain. Now as the first and chief external safeguard of a prince is in his council; and as it is his discerning faculty which must furnish him with this, so his next safety is in the choice of his friends; and it is the same discerning faculty which must secure him here too: for it is this that must distinguish between *friendship* and *flattery*, the most baneful mischief that can be practised by one man upon another; and shadows do not more inseparably follow bodies, than flattery the persons of great men. Flatterers are the *bosom enemies* of princes, laying *trains* for them, not at all less destructive, than that which was discovered this day; contriving their ruin acceptably, pleasingly, and according to their own heart's desire. *Poison* has frequently destroyed kings, but none has been so efficaciously mortal as that drank in by the *ear*.

* * * * *

God delivers Sovereign Princes, by imprinting a certain awe and dread of their persons and authority upon the minds of their subjects. For the strength of one man can do nothing against so many; and his wisdom and counsel but little more: and those who are to obey him, know so much, and yet for all that they yield him absolute subjection, dread his threatenings, tremble at his frowns, and lay their necks under his feet. Now from whence can all this be, but from

a secret work of the divine power, investing sovereign princes with certain marks and rays of that Divine image, which overawes, and controuls the spirits of men, they know not *how nor why*? But yet they feel themselves actually wrought upon, and kept under by them, and that very frequently against their will.

And this is that properly which in kings we call *majesty*, and which no doubt is a kind of portraiture of the divine authority drawn upon the looks and persons of princes, which makes them commanders of men's fears, and thereby capable of governing them in all their concerns. *Non fero fulgor oculorum tuorum*, is the language of every subject's heart, struck with the awful aspect of a resolute and magnanimous prince. There is a majesty in his countenance, that puts lighting into his looks and thunder into his words.

* * * * *

The piety of a king diffuses a blessing, and a protection upon the whole kingdom: for how often, upon the provocations of *Judah*, did the memory of *David's* piety (as it were) *disarm* the divine vengeance? So that in the *second book of Kings*, it is said three several times, upon three several remarkable occasions, that God *would not destroy Judah and Jerusalem for his servant David's sake*. And who knows, but the piety, the virtues, and the christian sufferings of the late martyred king, may be one great preservative of the present peace of this wretched and ungrateful nation? so that when God lately sent his destroying angel, with his drawn sword, over *Poland, Germany, Holland* and other countries; he has looked upon the blood of that royal martyr shed for the rights and liberties of his kingdoms, and bid the *destroying angel* pass over *England* and draw no more blood there, where the memory of that sacred blood had made such an expiation, and cried aloud for *mercy* upon all; even those *that shed it*, not excepted.

* * * * *

Religion is an immortal seed, and the church is proof against the *very gates of hell*, as being founded upon a *promise*, and so standing fast in the eternal strength of God's veracity. Nevertheless, as to its outward state and circumstances, it must clasp about the secular power, and as that frowns or smiles upon it, so it must droop or flourish. Accordingly God has declared *kings* to be *nursing* fathers of his church : and every prince by the essential inherent right of his crown is, or should be, a *defender of the faith*. He holds it by a charter from heaven ; long before the Pope's donation, who never gives any thing to princes, but what was their own before.

We know how glorious a deliverance our church received this day ; and it was by the wisdom of that head which wore the crown, that God vouchsafed it to her. King and church then, (as 'tis seldom otherwise) were both designed to the same fate. But God preserved the king, and the king the church. And who knows but for such a day as this, God paved his way before him in such a peaceable entrance into the *English* throne, so much above and against the expectation of the world round about him, and of the court of *Rome* especially ; which, it is well known, had other designs upon the anvil at that time. And as he then saved the church from perishing by one blow ; so he afterwards supported it from dying gradually, either by the encroachments of *superstition*, or the attempts of *innovation*.

And it is observable, (which I speak not in flattery, but in a profound sense of a blessing which the whole kingdom can never be thankful enough for ;) that none of the *families* that ever reigned over this nation, have to their power been so careful and tender of the church, kept their hands so clean from any thing that might look like *sacrilege*, been so zealous of its privileges, and so kind to its ministers, as the royal family that now sways the sceptre in the succession of three seve-

ral princes. And I doubt not but as sacrilege has blasted the mightiest families with a curse, so the abhorrence of it will and must perpetuate a blessing upon this.

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We learn from the premises, the duty and behaviour of subjects towards their princes. Does not God by such a protecting providence over kings, point out to us the sacredness of their persons? and command a *reverence*, where he himself thinks fit to place an *honour*? Does not every extraordinary deliverance of a prince, carry this inscription upon it in the brightest characters, *Touch not mine anointed*? Whom God has placed upon the *throne*, shall any human power presume to drag to the *bar*? or shall royal heads be crowned and anointed, only to prepare them to be sacrificed upon a scaffold?

As for our parts, when we reflect upon our prince, signalized by so many strange, unparalleled rescues, ought they not both to endear him to our allegiance, and in a manner consecrate him to our veneration? For is not this he, whom in the loins of his royal progenitor, God, by this day's mercy, (as I may so say) *delivered* before he was *born*? He, for whose sake God has since wrought so many miracles? *covering his head in the day of battle*, and which is more, securing it *after battle*, when such a *price* was set upon it? Is not this he, whom the same Providence followed into banishment, and gave him safety and honour, where he had not so much as to lay his head, or to set his foot upon, that he could call his own? Is not this he, whom God brought back again by a miracle as great as that by which he brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, not *dividing*, but (as it were) *drying up a Red Sea*, before him? Is not this he, whom neither the plots of his enemies at home, nor the united strength of those abroad have been able to shake or supplant? And lastly, is not this he, whom neither the barbarous

injuries of his rebel subjects at home, nor the temptations of foreign princes abroad, nor all the arts of *Rome* besides, could, in his greatest extremity, bring over to the *Romish profession* ;* but that after all, he returned, and since his return still continues in the same communion, which he was in when he went from us, *Carolus a Carolo*, firm and immoveable like the son of a father, who could rather part with his crowns, kingdoms, and his very life, than quit his honour or give up his religion ?

[* How sadly premature was this eulogium, the reader needs not to be told. That Charles was attended in his last hours by Romish priests, who administered to him the rites of that church, is now a matter of certified history. Yet a more scrupulous panegyrist of royalty than South, might have been excused for assuming a somewhat confident tone in regard to one, who himself could write to his brother the Duke of York during their common exile, in language like this: "Letters from Paris say, that it is the Queen's (Henrietta Maria, mother of Charles and James) purpose to do all she can to change your religion, in the which if you hearken to her or any one else, you must never think to see England or my face more."—Ed.]

DISCOURSE VII.

FALSE METHODS OF GOVERNING THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND EXPLODED.—*Gal. ii. 5.*

* * * * *

THE temper and disposition of those men, (the Dissenters,) who press for such compliances with them, certainly should be considered; and if it ought to give any force to their demands, it ought to be extremely *peaceable* and *impartial*. But are there any qualities incident to the nature of man, which these persons are farther from? For do they treat the governors of the church with any other appellation but that of *Baal's priests, formalists, dumb dogs, proud popish prelates, haters of God and good men*, and the like? I say, is not this their usual dialect? And can we imagine that the spirit of Christianity can suggest such language? Is it possible, that where true religion governs in the heart, it should thus utter itself at the mouth? And to show yet farther, that this temper can manifest itself by actions as well as words; did not those, who now plead conscience against law, in the year Forty-one, *persecute, plunder, kill, and murder*, those who pleaded and followed *conscience according to law*? And can any one assure the government that they will not, under the same circumstances, do the same things again?

And for their *impartiality*, did they ever grant *toleration* to any who were *dissenters* from them? The *Presbyterian* would grant none, and he has given the world so much under his own hand, in those many vehement books wrote by him on this subject; one of

which, I well remember long since, was by a kind of sanctified quibble entitled, *Intolerable Toleration*, a pamphlet mean enough, and of little note in the world, but as it served to show the temper of the *Presbyterian*, and how utterly averse he was to the indulging of any of a different persuasion from himself. And when his younger brother, the *Independent*, the abler and more thriving sectarian of the two, had tripped up his heels in the *Lord*, (a word then much in fashion,) and so brought in his *Independency*, with a kind of *toleration* along with it; yet still *prelacy*, no less than *papacy* itself, stood expressly excepted from any benefit, favour, or toleration, from the one party or the other; that is to say, both of them were ready to tolerate *Turks*, *Jews*, *Infidels*, (and even all who will but acknowledge one God,) rather than those of the communion of the church of *England*.

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Let us here first of all suppose our *dissenters* to be dealt with upon terms of *comprehension*, (as they call it,) and took into the communion of the church, without submitting to the present conditions of its communion, or any necessary obligation to obey the established rules of it, then these things must follow; first, that men shall come into the national ministry of the church of *England*, full of the *Scotch covenant*, and all those rebellious principles fresh and keen upon their spirits, which raised and carried on the late fatal war. Then will it also follow, that in the same diocese, and sometimes in the very same town, some shall use the *surplice*, and some shall not; and each shall have their parties prosecuting one another with the bitterest hatreds and animosities. Some in the same church, and at the same time, shall receive the *sacrament kneeling*, some *standing*, and others possibly *sitting*; some shall use the *cross in baptism*, and others shall not only not use it themselves, but shall also inveigh and preach against those who do. Some shall read

this part of the *Common-Prayer*, some that, and some perhaps none at all. And where (as in cathedrals) they cannot avoid the having it read by others, they shall come into the church when it is done, and stepping up into the pulpit, (with great gravity no doubt,) shall conceive a long, crude, extemporary prayer, in reproach of all the prayers which the church, with such admirable prudence and devotion, had been making before. Nay, in the same cathedral you shall see one prebendary in a surplice, another in a long cloak, another in a short coat, or *jacket*; and in the performance of the public service, some *standing up* at the *creed*, the *gloria patri*, and the *reading of the gospel*; and others sitting, and perhaps laughing, and winking upon their fellow schismatics, in scoff of those who practise these decent orders of the church. And from hence the mischief shall pass from *priest* to *people*, dividing them also into irreconcilable parties and factions; so that some shall come to church when such an one preaches, and absent themselves when another does. I will not hear this *formalist*, says one; and I will not hear that *schismatic*, (with better reason,) says another. But in the mean while, the church, by these horrible disorders, is torn in pieces, and the common enemies of it, the papists, and some (who hate it as much) gratified. These, I say, are some of the certain, unavoidable effects of *comprehension*; nor indeed could any other, or better, be expected by those, who knew, that their surest way to ruin the church, would be to get into the preferments of it. So that I dare avouch, that to bring in *comprehension*, is nothing else but, in plain terms, to *establish a schism in the church by law*, and so bring a *plague* into the very bowels of it, which is more than sufficiently endangered already, by having one in its *neighbourhood*; a *plague* which shall eat out the very heart and soul, and consume the vitals and spirits of it, and this to such a degree, that in the compass of a few years it shall scarce have any visible

being or subsistence, or so much as the face of a national church to be known by.

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To return to the high and mighty piece of *policy sublimite*, (as I may call it,) *toleration*. I am far from grudging our dissenters the benefit of the law they have obtained, (if it be such,) and farther from soliciting a repeal of it; but being providentially engaged in the subject I am now upon, I cannot but, as a divine, discharge my conscience both to God and the world, by declaring what I judge according to the best of my reason, unavoidably must be the consequences of a thing, which this *church* and *kingdom*, ever since they were a church and kingdom, have been wholly strangers to. And because such consequences, if drawn out to the utmost, would be innumerable; I shall only mention one, instead of all the rest, as being certain, obvious, and undeniable; and that is the vast increase of *sects* and *heresies* amongst us, which, where all restraint is taken off, must of necessity grow to the highest pitch, that the devil himself can raise such a *babel* to; so that there shall not be one bold, ringleading knave or fool, who shall have the confidence to set up a new sect, but shall find proselytes enough to wear his name, and list themselves under his banner; of which the *Quakers** are a demonstration past all dispute. And then what a vast part of this poor, deluded people must of necessity be drawn after these impostors! So that as *number* and *novelty* generally run down *truth* and *paucity* for a while; the church, and orthodox part of the nation in communion with it, will probably in a short space be overborn and swallowed up by the spreading mischief.

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Let all our separatists and dissenters know, that they are the *pope's* journeymen to carry on his work, and for aught I know, (were but king *James* amongst us,)

* George Fox, an illiterate cobbler, first beginner and head of them.

might be treated, together with his *nuncio*, at *Guild-hall*. They are, I say, his tools, to do that for him, which he cannot do for himself, (as a carpenter cannot be an hatchet, how effectually soever he may use it.) In a word, they are his harbingers and forerunners to prepare and make plain a way for him to come amongst us ; and consequently they, even they, who are the loudest criers out against popery, are the surest and most industrious factors for it. For it is evident to the whole world, that it is their weakening the church of *England* by their separation from it, and their unsufferable, virulent invectives against it, which makes *old reynard*, the pope, with his wolves about him, presume, that he may attack it now (being thus weakened by our encouraged dissenters to his hands) with victory and success. The thief first breaks the hedge and mounds of the vineyard, to fetch away a few clusters ; but the wild boar enters by the same breach, and makes havock of all. But let us, in the mean time, with all christian submission, wait the good pleasure of Almighty God and our governors, for one seven years, and by that time I question not but we shall see what this new project tends to, and is like to end in ; while, at present, we have but too great reason to believe, that the chief design of some of the busiest contrivers and most indefatigable promoters of it, was, and is, by such a promiscuous toleration of so many sects and heresies amongst us, to bring the church of *England* at length to need a *toleration* itself, and not to have it, when it needs it.

As to which truly primitive church (whatsoever fate may attend it) this may and must be said of it, that it is a church which claims nothing of secular power to itself, but like a poor orphan exposed naked and friendless to the world, pretends to no other helps but the goodness of God, the piety of its principles, and the justness of its own cause, to maintain it ; a church not born into the world with *teeth* and *talons*, like *popery*

and *presbytery*, but like a lamb, innocent and defenceless, and silent, not only under the shearer, but under the butcher too.

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And here let me utter a great, but sad truth ; a truth not so fit to be *spoke*, as to be *sighed* out by every true son and lover of the church, *viz.* that the *wounds*, which the church of *England* now bleeds by, she received *in the house of her friends*, (if they may be called so,) *viz.* her treacherous, undermining friends, and that most of the nonconformity to her, and separation from her, together with a contempt of her excellent constitutions, have proceeded from nothing more than from the false, partial, *half conformity* of too many of *her ministers*. The *surplice* sometime worn, and oftener laid aside ; the liturgy so read, and mangled in the reading, as if they were ashamed of it ; the divine service so curtailed, as if the people were to have the *tenths of it* from the priest, for *the tenths* he had received from them ; the clerical habit neglected by such in orders, as frequently travel the road clothed like farmers or graziers, to the unspeakable shame and scandal of their profession ; the holy sacrament slovenly administered ; the furniture of the altar abused and embezzled ; and the *table of the Lord* profaned. These, and the like vile passages, have made some schismatics, and confirmed others ; and, in a word, have made so many *nonconformists* to the church, by their *conforming* to their *minister*.

It was an observation of a judicious prelate, that of all the sorts of enemies which our church had, there was none so pernicious, and likely to prove so fatal to it, as the *conforming puritan*. It was a great truth, and not very many years after ratified by direful experience. For if you would have the *conforming puritan* described to you, as to what he is ;

He is one who lives by the *altar*, and *turns his back* upon it ; one, who catches at the *preferments* of the

church, but hates the *discipline* and *orders* of it ; one, who practises conformity, as papists take *oaths* and *tests*, that is, with an inward abhorrence of what he does for the present, and a resolution to act quite contrary, when occasion serves ; one, who, during his conformity, will be sure to be known by such a distinguishing badge, as shall point him out to, and secure his credit with, the dissenting brotherhood ; one, who still declines reading the church service himself, leaving that work to curates or readers, thereby to keep up a profitable interest with thriving, seditious tradesmen, and groaning, ignorant, but rich widows ; one, who, in the midst of his conformity, thinks of a turn of state, which may draw on one in the church too ; and accordingly is very careful to behave himself so, as not to *overshoot his game*, but to stand right and fair in case a *wish'd-for change* should bring fanaticism again into *fashion* ; which it is more than possible that he secretly desires, and does the utmost he can to promote and bring about.

DISCOURSE VIII.

THE CHRISTIAN PENTECOST.—1 Cor. xii. 4.

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The Papists, who having swallowed and digested the belief of so many monstrous contradictions, would do but very unwisely, if, for ever after, they should stick at any advantageous absurdity ; these hold, that the *gift of miracles* still continues ordinary in their church : and that the christian religion has still the same need of such miraculous confirmations, as it had at first.

Where, if by the *Christian* they mean their own *Popish religion*, I am so fully of their mind, that I think there is need, not only of *daily*, but even of *hourly* or rather *continual* miracles, to confirm it ; if it were but in that one single article of *transubstantiation*. But then we know whose badge and character the Scripture makes it, to *come in lying wonders* ; and we know also, *that lying wonders are true impostures* : and theirs are of that nature, that the fallacy is so gross, and the cheat so transparent in them, that, as it hardens the *Jews* and *Mahometans* with a desperate, invincible prejudice against *Christianity*, as a thing as false as those *miracles*, which they see it recommended by ; so, I am confident, that it causes many christians also to nauseate their own religion, and to fall into secret atheism ; being apt to think (as even these impostors also pretend) that the very miracles of the apostles might be of the same nature, with those which they see daily acted by these spiritual jugglers ; so that hereby the grand proof of christianity falls to

the ground, and has no force or hold upon men's minds at all. Whereas our Saviour himself laid the main stress and credit of his gospel, and of his mission from God, upon his *miracles*. *The works that I do* (says he) *bear witness of me*, (John x. 25.) And, *Believe me for my very works' sake*, (John xiv. 11.) And, *Had I not done amongst them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin*, (John xv. 24.) So that we see here, that the credit of all turned upon his *miracles*, his mighty and *supernatural* works.

But as, we know, it often falls out, that, when a man has once got the *character of a liar*, even truth itself is suspected, if not absolutely disbelieved, when it comes from the mouth of such an one : so these *miracle-mongers* have alarmed the world round about them to a discernment of their *tricks*, when they came afterwards to preach *christianity*, especially to *infidels*, and to press it upon men's belief in the strength of those miraculous works which were truly and really done by Christ ; yet, since they pretend the same of their own works too, (which all people see through, and know to be *lies*, and *impostures*) all, that they preach of Christ, is presently looked upon as false, and fictitious, and leaves the minds of men locked up under a *fixed, obstinate, and impregnable infidelity*. Such a fatal blow has the legerdmain of those wretches given to the christian religion, and such jealousies have they raised in some men's thoughts against it, by their false miracles and fabulous stories of *the romantic* feats of their pretended saints.

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God has use of all the several tempers and constitutions of men, to serve the exigencies of his church by. Amongst which some are of a sanguine, cheerful, and debonair disposition, having their imaginations, for the most part, filled and taken up with pleasing ideas, and images of things ; seldom or never troubling their

thoughts, either by looking too *deep* into them, or dwelling too long upon them.

There are others of a *melancholy, reserved, and severe temper*, who *think much and speak little*; and these are the fittest to serve the church in the *pensive, afflictive* parts of religion; in the austerities of mortification, in a retirement from the world, and a settled composure of their thoughts to self-reflection and meditation. And such also are the ablest to deal with distressed consciences, to meet with their doubts, and to answer their objections, and to ransack every corner of their shifting, and fallacious hearts, &c. And it is the same thoughtful temper of spirit, which must enable others to serve the church in the hard and controversial parts of religion. Which sort of men (though they should never *rub men's itching ears* from the pulpit) the church can no more be without, than a garrison can be without *soldiers*, or a city without walls; or than a man can defend himself with his *tongue*, when his enemy comes against him with his *sword*. And therefore, great pity it is, that such as God has peculiarly furnished, and (as it were) cut out for this service, should be cast upon, and compelled to the *popular, speaking, noisy* part of divinity; it being all one, as if, when a town is besieged, the governor of it should call off a valiant and expert soldier from the walls, to sing him a song or play him a lesson upon the violin at a banquet, and then turn him out of town, because he could not sing and play as well as he could fight. And yet as ridiculous as this is, it is but too like the humour of the present age; which thinks all sense and worth confined wholly to the pulpit. And many excellent persons, because they cannot make a noise with *chapter and verse*, and harangue it *twice a day to factious tradesmen*, and ignorant *old women*, are esteemed of as nothing, and scarce thought worthy to eat the church's bread. But for all these false notions, and wrong measures of things and persons, so

scandalously prevalent amongst us, *wisdom* (as our Saviour tells us) *is and will be justified of her children.*

But then again, there are others besides these, who are of a more fervent spirit, having much of *heat* and *fire* in their constitution : and God may and does serve his church even by such kind of persons as these also, as being *particularly* fitted to preach the terrifying rigors and *curses of the law* to obstinate sinners ; which is a work, of as high a consequence to the good of souls, as it is, that men should be *driven*, if they cannot be *drawn off* from their sins ; that they should be cut and lanced, if they cannot otherwise be cured, and that the terrible *trump of the last judgment* should be always sounding in their ears, if nothing else can awaken them. But then, while such persons are thus busied in *preaching of judgment*, it is much to be wished, that they would do it with *judgment* too ; and not preach *hell* and *damnation* to sinners so, as if they were *pleased* with what they preached ; no, let them rather take heed, that they mistake not their own fierce temper for the mind of God ; for some I have known to do so, and that at such a rate, that it was easy enough to distinguish the humour of the speaker from the nature of the thing he spoke. Let ministers threaten *death and destruction* even to the very worst of men in such a manner, that it may appear to all their sober hearers, that they do not *desire*, but *fear* that these dreadful things should come to pass : let them declare God's wrath against the impenitent, as I have seen a *Judge* condemn a *malefactor*, with *tears* in his *eyes* : for surely much more should a *dispenser of the word*, while he is pronouncing the infinitely more killing sentence of the *divine law*, grieve with an inward-bleeding compassion for the misery of those forlorn wretches, whom it is like to pass upon. But I never knew any of the *Geneva*, or *Scotch* model (which sort of sanctified *reprobationers* we abound with) either use, or like this way of preaching in my life ;

but generally *whips and scorpions, wrath and vengeance, fire and brimstone*, made both top and bottom, front and rear, first and last of all their discourses.

But then, there are others again, of a gentler and more tender genius, and these are full as serviceable for the work of the ministry, as the former, though not in the same way; as being much fitter to represent the *meekness of Moses*, than to *preach his law*; to bind up the *broken-hearted*, to speak comfort to the *weary*, &c. *Nature* itself seems peculiarly to have fitted such for the dispensations of *grace*. And when they are once put into the ministry, they are (as it were) marked and singled out by Providence, to do those benign offices to the souls of men, which persons of a more vehement disposition are by no means so fit to do. These are the men, whom God pitches upon for the *heralds* of his *mercy*, with a peculiar *emphasis* and felicity of address, to issue out the pardons of the gospel, to close up the wounds which the *legal preacher* had made, to bathe and supple them with the *oil of gladness*; and in a word, to crown the sorrows of repentance with the joys of assurance.

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God has made no man *in opprobrium Naturæ*, only to overlook his fellow creatures, to upbraid them with their defects, and to discourage them with the amazing distance of the comparison: he has filled no man's intellects so full, but he has left some vacuities in them, that may sometimes send him for supplies to *minds* of a much lower pitch: he has stocked no land with such universal plenty, without the mixture of some wants, to be the ground and cause of commerce: for mutual wants, and mutual perfections together, are the bond and cement of conversation. The vast knowledge and ruling abilities of *Moses*, might yet stand in need of *Aaron's* elocution: and he who *speaks with the tongue of angels*, and the greatest fluency of spiritual rhetoric, may yet be at a loss, when he comes

to matters of controversy, and to assert the truth against the sophistry of a subtle opponent.

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The foregoing doctrine affords us also a touchstone for the *trial of spirits* : for, such as are the *gifts*, such must be also the *spirit* from which they flow : and since both of them have been so much pretended to, it is well for the church, that it has the rule of judgment, and a note of discrimination. There is none, who is not wilfully a stranger to the affairs of our *Israel*, but has had the noise and blusters of *gifted brethren*, and of *persons pretending to the spirit*, ringing in his ears. Concerning which plea of theirs, since we all know, that there are *spirits*, both *good and bad*, it cannot be denied, but that in some sense *they might have the spirit* (such a *spirit* as it was) and that in a very large measure : but as for *their gifts*, we must examine them by the standard of those here mentioned by the apostle.

And first, for *that of prophecy* : These men were once full of a prophecy that the world should be destroyed in the year 1656 ; because, forsooth, the flood came upon the old world in that year reckoning from the creation. And again, that the downfall of *pope* and *antichrist*, together with that of *monarchy* and *episcopacy*, (which they always accounted as limbs of *antichrist*) should be in the year 1666. And that because some remarkable mention is made of the *number 666* in the *Revelation* ; with many other such like predictions : the event of all which has shewn, that those men were not of *God's privy council* ; but on the contrary, that all their *prophecies* were like those of almanacks, which warn every wise body to prepare against *foul weather*, by their foretelling *fair*.

And then for the *gift of healing* : let a bleeding church and state shew, how notably they were gifted that way. They played the *chirurgeons* indeed with a witness, but we never yet heard that they acted the

physician ; all their practice upon the *body politic* was with *powder and ball, sword and pistol*. No saving of life with those men, but by *purging away the estate*.

And likewise for the *gift of discerning of spirits* : they had their *triers*, that is, a court appointed for the trial of ministers ; but most properly called *Cromwell's inquisition* ; in which they would pretend to know men's *hearts*, and inward *bent of their spirits* (as their word was) by their very looks. But the truth is, as the chief pretence of those triers was to inquire into men's *gifts* ; so if they found them but *well* gifted in the hand, they never looked any further ; for a *full and free hand* was with them an abundant demonstration of a *gracious heart* ; a word in great request in those times.

And moreover, for the *gifts of divers tongues* : it is certain, that they scarce spake the same thing for two days together. Though otherwise it must be confessed, that they were none of the greatest *linguists* ; their own mother tongue serving all their occasions, without ever so much as looking into the *fathers*, who always spoke the language of the *beast* to such as could not understand them. *Latin* was with them a mortal crime, and *Greek*, instead of being owned for the language of the *Holy Ghost*, (as in the New Testament it is,) was looked upon like the *sin against it* ; so that in a word, they had all the *confusions of Babel* among them, without the *diversity of tongues*.

And *lastly*, for the *gift of interpreting* ; they thought themselves no ordinary men at expounding a chapter ; if the turning of a few rational significant words and sentences into a loose, tedious harangue, could be called an *exposition*. But above all, for their *interpreting gift*, you must take them upon *Ezekiel, Daniel*, and the *Revelation* ; and from thence (as it were) out of a dark prophetic *cloud*, thundering against the old cavaliers, and the church of *England*,

and (as I may but too appositely express it) *breaking them upon the wheels* in *Ezekiel*, casting them to the *beasts* in *Daniel*, and *pouring upon them all the vials* in the *Revelation*. After which let any one deny it who durst, that the *black decree* was absolutely passed upon those *malignants*, and that they were all of them, to a man, sons of *reprobation*. And thus, I think, I have reckoned up most of the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, and compared them with those of our late *gifted brethren*.

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This emanation of gifts from the spirit, assures us that *knowledge and learning* are by no means opposite to *grace*; since we see *gifts* as well as *graces* conferred by the same *spirit*. But amongst those of the late *reforming age*, (whom we have been speaking of,) all *learning* was utterly cried down. So that with them the best *preachers* were such as could not *read*, and the ablest *divines* such as could not *write*. In all their *preachments*, they so highly pretended to the *spirit*, that they could hardly so much as *spell the letter*. To be *blind*, was with them the proper qualification of a spiritual *guide*, and to be *book-learned* (as they called it) and to be *irreligious*, were almost *terms convertible*. None were thought fit for the ministry but *tradesmen* and *mechanics*, because none else were allowed to *have the spirit*. Those only were accounted like *St. Paul*, who could *work with their hands*, and in a literal sense, *drive the nail home*, and be able to *make a pulpit*, before they *preached* in it.

DISCOURSE IX.

CONCEALMENT OF SIN, NO SECURITY.—*Numb.* xxxii. 23.

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God has annexed *two great evils* to every sin, in opposition to the *pleasure* and *profit* of it; to wit, *shame* and *pain*. He has by an eternal decree, made *these two*, the inseparable *effects* and *consequents* of sin. They are the *wages* assigned it by the laws of heaven; so that whosoever commits it, ought to account *shame* and *punishment* to belong to him, as his rightful inheritance. For it is God who has joined them together by an *irreversible sentence*; and it is not in the power or art of man to put them asunder. And there is nothing which the nature of man does so peculiarly dread as these; they being indeed the most directly destructive of all its enjoyments: forasmuch as they reach and confound it in the *adequate subject* of enjoyment, the *soul* and *body*; *shame* being properly the torment of the one, and *pain* of the other. For the mind of man can have no taste of any pleasure in the world, while it is actually overwhelmed with *shame*; nothing does so intolerably affect the soul, as infamy: It drinks up, and consumes the *quickness*, the *gaiety*, and *activity* of the spirits: It *dejects the countenance*, made by God himself to *look upwards*; so that this noble creature, the master-piece of the creation, dares not so much as *lift up* either his *head* or his *thoughts*, but it is a vexation to him even to *look* upon others, and yet a greater to be *looked upon* by them. And as *shame* thus mortifies the soul, so *pain* or *punishment*

(the other twin-effect of sin) equally harasses the body.

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Men consider the success they have actually had in the commission of many sins ; and this proves an encouraging argument to them to commit the same for the future ; as naturally suggesting this to their thoughts, that what *they have done so often*, without either *discovery* or *punishment*, may be so done by them again. For nothing does so much confirm a man in the continuance of any practice, as frequent experience of success in what he does ; the proper, genuine result of this, being *confidence*. Some indeed stumble in their very first *entrance* upon a sinful course ; and this their disappointment frequently proves their cure, by making them to retreat timely, disheartened with so unfortunate a beginning. And it is (no doubt) the singular mercy of God to such, thus to turn them out of the *paths of destruction* ; which had they found smooth, safe, and pleasurable, the corruption of their hearts would have infallibly engaged them in them to their lives' end. That traveller, surely, has but little cause to complain, who, by breaking a leg or an arm, at his first setting out upon an unfortunate journey, prevents the losing of his head at his journey's end ; it being but a very uncomfortable way of travelling, to finish one's journey and one's life together. Great reason, therefore, have they to own themselves particularly favoured by Providence, who have been in the very first attempts of sin, snatched (as it were a brand) out of the fire, or (which is yet better) have been kept from ever *falling into it* : Their being *scorched*, has prevented their being *burnt* ; while the fright, caused by the danger they so narrowly escaped, has been always fresh upon their memories : And such as come to be thus happily *frighted into their wits*, are not so easily fooled out of them again. In short, all frustration in the first essays of a vicious course, is a baulk to

the confidence of the bold undertaker. And therefore, when God is pleased to leave a man under the *full sway of any vice*, he does not concern his Providence to lay any block in such an one's way, but suffers him to effect all his projects, and compass the full satisfaction of his *lewd desires*. And this flushes him up, and makes him hard and *insensible*; and that makes him venturous and daring; and so locks him fast in the embraces of his sin, while he has not the least surmise of the sadness of the issue, and that the *present sweets* of sin, will and must be *bitterness in the end*; but like a sot in a tavern, first drinks himself drunk, and then forgets that there is a reckoning to be paid.

Such an one, the devil accounts he has fast enough; and for that cause, none shall so studiously endeavour to promote a man's *quiet* and *success* in sin, as he who at present *tempts* him to it, and will hereafter *torment* him for it. For the devil desires not that the sinner should feel any trouble for sin, till he comes to feel it for good and all in *that place*, which is designed only for *payment*, and not *amendment*; and where all that he can do or suffer to eternal ages, can contribute nothing to his *release*. And therefore that the sinner may *sleep on* soundly in his sin, the *devil* will be sure to make his *bed soft enough*. It is said of the *Spaniard*, that there are two things much accounted of, and desired by many in the world, which yet he heartily wishes his enemy; one is, that if he be a *gamester*, he may win; the other, that if he be a *courtier* of women, he may obtain his desires; for that he knows well enough, that either of these courses will, in all likelihood, prove his undoing at long run.

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Could we hear the *secret language* of most men's thoughts, we should hear them making such kind of *answers* to the checks of conscience dissuading them from sin, and laying the danger of it before them, as these: Pray, what mischief befel such an *oppressor*,

such a *tyrant*, or such a *rebel*? And who passed his life with more *affluence* and *jollity*, than such an *epicure*, such a *money-monger*, such a *talley-broker* and cheater of the *public*? And have not some dexterous *accomplants* got estates, and made their fortunes, by a clever stroke or two of their pen? And by a *skilful mistake*, wrote themselves forty or fifty thousand pounds richer than they were before, in a trice? And did not that discreet *Roman Verres*, lighting into a wealthy province, carry off from thence enough to serve *himself*, his *friends*, and his *judges* too? And why may not others, *whose parts lie the same way*, follow such lucky examples? And the *thriving hypocrites of the present age* find as fair quarter from God and man, as any of the *former*? With such *considerations* as these, (if they may be called so,) men commonly arm themselves against all the *threatenings* of the divine judgments; and think that, in the strength of them, they can warrant the most resolute pursuit of their *vices* for safe and rational. They see not the smoke of the *bottomless pit*, and so dread not the fire.

Flourishing sinners are indeed plausible arguments to induce men to sin: But, thanks be to God, that for a sinner to *spend and end his days flourishing*, is a privilege allowed by him to very few; and those only such, as are likely to be much *lower* in the other world, than ever they were *high* in this.

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God sometimes makes one sin the means of discovering another; it often falling out with two *vices*, as with two rogues; of whom it is hard to say, which is worse, and yet one of them may serve well enough to betray the other. How many have by their *drunkenness* disclosed their *thefts*, their *lusts*, and *murders*, which might have been buried in perpetual silence, had not the sottish committers of them buried their *reason* in their *cups*? For the *tongue* is then got

loose from its obedience to *reason*, and commanded at all adventures by the fumes of a distempered brain and a roving imagination; and so presently pours forth whatsoever they shall suggest to it, sometimes casting away *life, fortune, reputation*, and all in a breath.

And how does the *confident* sinner know, but the *grace of God*, which he has so often affronted, may some time or other desert, and give him up to the sordid temptations of the *jug*, and the *bottle*, which shall make the doors of his heart *fly open*; and cause his own tongue to give in *evidence* against him, for all the villanies which had lain so long *heaped up*, and concealed in his guilty breast? For let no man think, that he has the secrets of his *own mind* in his *own power*, while he has not himself so; as it is most certain that he has not, who is actually under a *debauch*: For this turns all the faculties of the soul topsy-turvy; like a storm tossing and troubling the sea, till it makes all the foul, black stuff, which lay at the bottom, to swim upon the top.

In like manner, the *drunken man's heart* floats upon his lips, and his inmost *thoughts* write themselves upon his *forehead*; and therefore, as it is an usual, and indeed a very rational saying, *that a liar ought to have a good memory*; so upon the like account, *a person of great guilt ought to be also a person of great sobriety*; lest otherwise his very *soul* should, some time or other, chance to be *poured out* with his *liquor*: For commonly, the same hand which *pierces* the vessel, *broaches* the heart also, and it is no strange, nor unusual passage from the *tavern* to the *jail*.

God sometimes infatuates, and strikes the sinner with *frenzy* and *distraction*, as causes him to reveal all his hidden baseness; and to *blab* out such *truths*, as will be sure to be revenged upon him who speaks them. In a word, God blasts his understanding, for having used it so much to the dishonour of him who gave it; and delivers him over to a sort of *madness*,

too black and criminal to be allowed any refuge in *bedlam*. And for this, there have been several fearful instances of such wretched contemners of heaven, as having, for many years, outfaced all the world, both about them, and above them too, with a solemn look and a demure countenance, have yet, at length, had their loathsome *inside* turned *outwards*, and been made an abhorred spectacle to men and angels.

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Some sorts of sin there are, which will lie *burning* and *boiling* in the sinner's *breast*, like a kind of *Vesuvius*, or fire pent up in the *bowels* of the *earth*; which yet *must*, and *will* (in spite of all obstacles) force its way out of it at length; and thus, in some cases of sin, the anguish of the mind grows so *fierce* and *intolerable*, that it finds no rest within itself, but it is even ready to *burst*, till it is delivered of the *swelling secret* it labours with: Such kind of guilt being to the conscience, like some offensive meats to the stomach, which no sooner takes them in, but it is in pain and travail, till it throws them out again.

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God sometimes takes the work of *vengeance* upon himself, and immediately, with *his own arm*, repays the sinner, by some notable judgment from heaven: Sometimes, perhaps, he strikes him *dead suddenly*; and sometimes he smites him with some loathsome disease, (which will hardly be thought the *gout*, whatsoever it may be called,) and, sometimes again, he strangely blasts him in his name, family, or estate, so that all about him stand amazed at the blow; but *God* and the *sinner* himself know well enough the *reason* and the meaning of it too.

Justice, we know, uses to be pictured *blind*, and therefore it finds out the sinner, not with its *eyes*, but with its *hands*; not by *seeing*, but by *striking*: And it is the honour of the *great attribute* of *God's justice*,

which he thinks so much concerned, to give some *pledge* of itself upon bold sinners in this world ; and so to assure them of a *full payment hereafter*, by paying them something in the way of *earnest* here.

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These are some of the chief ways by which God finds out the sinner in this life. But what now, if none of all these should reach *his* case, but that he carries his crimes all his life *closely*, and ends that quietly ; and perhaps in the eye of the world, honourably too ; and so has the good luck to have his *shame* cast into the same ground with his *carcass* ? Why yet, for all this, the man has not *escaped* ; but his *guilt* still haunts, and follows him into the other world, where there can be no longer a concealment of it, but it must *inevitably find him out*. For, *when the judgment shall be set, the books shall be also opened* ; even those *doomsday books*, (as I may so call them,) wherein God has kept a complete register of all the villanies that were ever committed against him, which then shall be read aloud in the audience of that terrible court. The *consideration* of which, surely, may well put those excellent words of the apostle, (*Rom. vi. 21.*) with this little alteration of them, into our mouths. *What fruit can we [now] have of those things, whereof we shall [then] be ashamed !*

DISCOURSE X.

OF DELIGHT IN OTHER MEN'S SINS.—*Rom. i. 32.*

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This is so great a master-piece in sin, that no man begins with it : He must have passed his *tyrocinium*, or *noviciate*, in sinning, before he can come to this, be he never so quick a proficient. No man can mount so fast, as to set his foot upon the highest step of the ladder at first. Before a man can come to be pleased with a sin, before he sees his neighbour commit it, he must have had such a long acquaintance with it himself, as to create a kind of intimacy between him and that ; and then, we know, a man is naturally glad to see his old friend, not only at his own house, but wheresoever he meets him. It is generally the property of an old sinner to find a delight in reviewing his own villanies in the practice of other men ; to see his sin, and himself (as it were) in reversion ; and to find a greater satisfaction in beholding him, who succeeds him in his vice, than him who is to succeed him in his estate. In the matter of sin, age makes a greater change upon the soul, than it does or can, upon the body. And as, if we compare the picture of a man, drawn at the years of seventeen or eighteen, with a picture of the same at threescore and ten, hardly the least trace of one face can be found in the other : so for the soul, the difference of the qualities of the inner man, will be found much greater. Compare the harmlessness, credulity, tenderness, modesty, and ingenious plianess to virtuous counsels, which is in youth, as it

comes fresh and untainted out of the hands of nature, with the mischievousness, craft, impudence, falsehood, and confirmed obstinacy in most sorts of sin, that is to be found in a long-practised sinner, and you will confess the hue of his soul, to be altered more than that of his face. Age has given him another body, and custom another mind. All those seeds of virtue, that were the natural endowments of our first years, are lost for ever. And in respect of the native innocence of childhood, no man, through *old age*, becomes *twice a child*. The vices of old age have in them the stiffness of it too: And as it is the unfittest time to *learn in*, so the unfitness of it to *unlearn*, will be found much greater.

Which considerations, joined with that of its imbecility, make it the proper season for a superannuated sinner to enjoy the delights of sin in the rebound; and to supply the impotence of practice by the airy, fantastic pleasure of memory and reflection. For all that can be allowed him now, is to refresh his decrepit, effete sensuality, with the transcript of his former life, recognised, and read over by him, in the vicious rants of the vigorous, youthful debauchees of the present time, whom (with an odd kind of passion, mixed with pleasure, and envy too) he sees flourishing in all the bravery and prime of their age and vice. An old wrestler loves to look on, and to be near the lists, though *feebleness* will not let him offer at the prize. An old huntsman finds a music in the noise of hounds, though he cannot follow the chace. An old drunkard loves a tavern, though he cannot go to it, but as he is supported, and led by another, just as some are observed to come from thence. And an old wanton will be doating upon women, when he can scarce see them without spectacles. And to shew the true love and allegiance that the old servants and subjects of vice ever after bear to it, nothing is more frequent, than to hear, that such as have been strumpets in their youth, turn procurers in

their age. Their great concern is, that the vice may still go on.

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But if now, we should chance to find a father corrupting his son, or a mother debauching her daughter, as (God knows, such monsters have been seen within the four seas) we must not charge this barely upon an high predominance of vice in these persons, but much more upon a peculiar anomaly, and baseness of nature ; if the name of *nature* may be allowed to that which seems to be an utter cashiering of it, a contradiction to the common principles of humanity. For this is such a disposition, as strips the *father* of the *man* ; as makes him *sacrifice his children* to Moloch ; and as much out-do the cruelty of a *cannibal*, or a *Saturn*, as it is more barbarous to *damn* a child than to *devour* him. We sometimes read and hear of monstrous *births*, but we may often see a greater monstrosity in *educations* ; thus, when a father has begot a man, he trains him up into a beast ; making even his own house a stew, and a school of lewdness, to instil the rudiments of vice into the unwary, flexible years of his poor children, poisoning their tender minds with the irresistible, authentic venom of his base example ; so that all the instruction they find within their father's walls, shall be only to be disciplined to an earlier practice of sin, to be *catechised* into all the mysteries of iniquity, and at length, *confirmed* in a mature, incorrigible debauchery. And this some parents call a teaching their children to *know the world*, and to *study men* : thus leading them (as it were) by the hand, through all the forms and classes of villany, till at length they make them ten times more the children of the *devil*, than *themselves*. Now, I say, if the unparalleled wickedness of the age should at any time cast us upon such blemishes of mankind as these, who, while they thus treat their children, should usurp the name of *parents* ; let us not call them by the low, diminutive *title* of *wicked*, or *ungodly* men ; but let us look upon them

as so many prodigious exceptions from our common nature, as so many portentous animals, like the strange unnatural productions of *Africa*, and fit to be *publicly shewn*, were they not unfit to *be seen*.

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The writings, both of the Old and New Testament, make it very difficult for a man to be *saved*; but the writings of these men (the Antinomians) make it more difficult for any one to be *damned*: for where there is no sin, there can be no damnation. And, as these men have confounded the natures and properties of things by their wretched sophistry, though an act be never so sinful, they will be sure to strip it of its guilt; and to make the very *law* and *rule* of action so *pliable*, that it shall be impossible to be *broke*. So that he, who goes to hell, must pass through a *narrower gate* than that, which the gospel says, leads to *heaven*. For that, we are told, is only *straight*, but this is absolutely *shut*; and so shut, that sin cannot pass it, and therefore it is much if a *sinner* should.

So insufferably have these impostors poisoned the fountains of morality, perverted and embased the very standard of good and evil. So that all their writings are but debauchery upon record, and impiety registered and consigned over to posterity.

And to shew how far the malignity of this way of sinning reaches; he, who has vented a pernicious doctrine or published an ill book, must know that his guilt and his life determine not together: no, such an one (as the apostle says) *being dead, yet speaketh*; he sins in his very grave, corrupts others while he is rotting himself, and has a growing account in the other world, after he has paid nature's last debt in this: and in a word, quits this life like a man carried off by the plague; who, though he dies himself, yet does execution upon others by a surviving infection.

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With great variety of such kind of traders for hell, as these, has the nation of late years abounded:

Wretches who live upon the shark, and other men's sins, the common poisoners of youth, equally desperate in their fortunes, and their manners, and getting their very bread by the damnation of souls. So that if any unexperienced young novice, happens into the fatal neighbourhood of such pests, presently they are upon him, plying his full purse and his empty pate with addresses suitable to his vanity ; telling him, what pity it is, that one so accomplished for parts and person, should smother himself in the country, where he can learn nothing of gallantry or behaviour ; as how to make his court, to hector a drawer, to cog the dye, or storm a brothel ; but must of necessity live and die ignorant of what it is to trapan, or be trappanned, to sup, or rather dine at midnight in a tavern, with the noise of oaths, blasphemies, and fiddlers about his ears, and to fight every watch and constable at his return from thence, and to be beaten by them : but must at length, poor man ! die dully of old age at home ; when here he might so genteely, long before that time, have been duelled or fluxed into another world.

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I doubt not, (how much soever knaves may abuse fools with words for a time,) but there will come a day, in which the most active *Papists* will be found under the *Puritan* mask ; in which it will appear, that the conventicle has been the Jesuits' safest kennel, and the Papists themselves, as well as the fanatics, have been managers of all those monstrous out-cries against Popery, to the ruin of those Protestants whom they most hate, and whom alone they fear. It being no unheard of trick for a thief, when he is closely pursued, to cry out, *stop the thief*, and thereby diverting the suspicion from himself, to get clear away. It is also worth our while, to consider with what terms of respect knaves and sots will speak of their own fraternity. As, *what an honest, what a worthy man is such an one ! And what a good-natured person is another !* According to which terms, such as are factious,

by *worthy men*, mean only such as are united in the same designs against the government with themselves. And such as are brothers of the pot, by a *good-natured person*, mean only a true, trusty debauchee, who never stands out at a merry-meeting, so long as he is able to stand at all ; nor ever refuses an health, while he has enough of his own to pledge it with.

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For, in respect of vice, nothing is more usual now-a-days, than for boys *illico nasci senes*. They see their betters delight in ill things : they observe reputation, to attend the practice of them ; and this carries them on furiously to that, which, of themselves, they are but too much inclined to ; and which laws were purposely made by wise men to keep them from. They are glad, you may be sure, to please and prefer themselves at once.

And, as they are come to this rampancy of vice, in a great measure, from the countenance of their superiors ; so they have took some steps higher in the same from this, that the follies and extravagances of the young, too frequently carry with them the approbation of the old. For age, which unavoidably is but one remove from death, and consequently should have nothing about it, but what looks like a decent preparation for it, scarce ever appears of late days, but in the high mode, the flaunting garb, and utmost gaudery of youth ; with clothes as ridiculous, and as much in the fashion, as the person that wears them is usually grown out of it. The eldest equal the youngest in the vanity of their dress, and no other reason can be given of it, but that they equal, if not surpass them in the vanity of their desires. So that those who by the majesty and (as I may so say) the prerogative of their age, should even frown youth into sobriety and better manners, are now striving all they can, to imitate and strike in with them, and to be really *vicious*, that they may be *thought* to be *young*.

DISCOURSE XI.

SHAMELESS SIN, THE SURE PRECURSOR OF RUIN.

Jer. vi. 15.

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Shame above all other things is properly the torment of the soul, and (considering the innate generosity of man's mind disposing him to prefer *a good name* before life itself,) is much more grievous and insupportable to him, than other inflictions. So that in that *grand exemplar* of suffering, even our Saviour himself, *his enduring the cross* is heightened and set off by *his despising the shame*, as that which far surpassed all the cruelties of the rods, the nails, and the spear, and upon the truest estimate of pain, much the bitterer passion of the two. And from hence also it is, that no penal laws are found so forcible for the control of vice, as those wherein shame makes the chief ingredient of the penalty. Death at the block, looks not so grim and dismal as death at the gibbet; for here it meets a man clad with infamy and reproach, which does a more grievous execution upon his mind, than the other can upon his body. Nay, wounds, and pain, and death itself, from *terrible*, sometimes become *contemptible*, where they are looked upon but as a passage to *honour*, and many are easily brought to write their names with their own *blood* in the records of fame and immortality.

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The *examples of great persons* take away the shame of any thing which they are observed to *practise*, though never so foul and shameful in itself. Every such person

stamps a kind of *authority* upon what he does ; and the examples of *superiors* (and much more of *sovereigns*) are both a *rule* and an *encouragement* to their *inferiors*. The action is seldom *abhorred*, where the agent is *admired* ; and the *filth* of one is hardly taken notice of, where the *lustre* of the other *dazzles* the beholder. Nothing is, or can be more contagious, than an *ill action* set off with a *great example* : For it is natural for men to imitate those above them, and to endeavour to *resemble* (at least) that, which they *cannot be*. And therefore, whatsoever they see such *grandees* do, quickly becomes current and creditable, it passes *cum privilegio* ; and no man blushes at the imitation of a *scarlet*, or a *purple sinner*, though the sin be so too.

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The *observation of the general and common practice* of any thing, takes away the shame of that practice. Better *be out of the world*, than *not be like the world*, is the language of most hearts. The commonness of a practice turns it into a *fashion*, and few, we know, are ashamed to *follow that*. A vice *a-la-mode* will look virtue itself *out of countenance*, and it is well if it does not look it *out of heart too*. Men love not to be found singular, especially where the singularity lies in the rugged paths of virtue. Company causes confidence, and multitude gives both *credit* and *defence*, credit to the crime, and defence to the criminal. The fearfullest and the basest creatures, got into herds and flocks, become bold and daring ; and the modestest natures, hardened by the fellowship of others in the same vicious course, grow into another frame of spirit ; and in a short time lose all apprehension of the indecency and foulness of that, which they have so familiarly and so long conversed with. Impudence fights with and by *number*, and by *multitude* becomes victorious. For no man is ashamed to look his fellow thief or drunkard in the face, or to own a *rebellious design in the head of a rebel-army*.

And we see, every day, what a degree of shamelessness the common practice of some sins amongst us has brought the generality of the nation to ; so that persons of that sex, whose proper ornament should be *bashfulness and modesty*, are grown bold and forward, offer themselves into company, and even *invite* those addresses, which the severity of former times would have scorned to *admit* : From the retirements of the closet, they are come to brave it in theatres and taverns ; where virtue and modesty are *drunk down*, and *honour left behind to pay the reckoning*. And now, ask such persons, with what face they can assume such unbecoming liberties ; and they shall answer you, that it is the *mode*, the *gallantry*, and the *genteel freedom* of the present age, which has redeemed itself from the pitiful pedantry and absurd scrupulosity of former times, in which those bugbears of *credit* and *conscience* spoiled all the *pleasure*, the *air*, and *fineness* of conversation. This is all the account you shall have from them ; and thus, when common practice has vouched for an ill thing, and called it by a plausible name, the *credit of the word* shall take away the *shame of the thing* : Vice grows triumphant ; and knowing itself to be in its full glory, scorns to fly to corners or concealments, but loves to be seen and gazed upon, and has thrown off the *mask* or *vizard* as an useless, unfashionable thing. This, I say, is the guise of our age, our *free thinking*, and *freer practising* age, in which people generally are ashamed of nothing, but to *be virtuous*, and to *be thought old*.

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The last degree of *shamelessness* in sin, is to *glory in it*. And higher than this, the corruption of man's nature (as corrupt as it is) cannot possibly go ; though, the truth is, this may seem to proceed, not so much from a corruption of it, as from something that is a direct contradiction to it. For can any thing in nature incline a man to glory in his *imperfections* ? To plume

himself in his deformities? Was ever any one yet seen to boast of a blear-eye, or a crook-back? And are not the defects of the soul, by so much the more ugly, by how much the soul is naturally more noble than the body?

Yet some there are, who have shook off reason and humanity so far, as to trumpet out those *villanies upon the house tops*, which such as sin but at an ordinary rate of wickedness, commit only in the *corners* of them: *They declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it not.* For may we not hear some vaunting what quantities of drink they can pour down? And how many *weak brethren* they have in such heroic pot-combats laid under the *table*? And do not others report with ostentation, how dexterously they have over-reached their well-meaning neighbour? How neatly they have gulled him of his estate, or abused him in his bed? And lastly, have not some arrived to that frontless impudence, as to say openly, *that they hoped to live to see the day, in which an honest woman, or a virtuous man, should be ashamed to show their head in company?* How long such persons may live, I know not; how long they *deserve to live*, it is easy to tell. And I dare affirm, that it is as much the concern of government, that the utterers of such things should be laid hold on by the hand of public justice, as to put to death any common malefactor. For this is publicly to set up a standard in the behalf of vice. I must confess, I am *ashamed* thus to lay open men's *want of shame*. But whosoever they are, who are come to this height, let them know that they are *consummate* in vice, and upon all accounts so unspeakably bad, that the devil himself can neither *make* nor *wish* them worse.

DISCOURSE XII.

OF COVETOUSNESS.—*Luke* xii. 15.

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WE never find the scripture commending any prodigal but one, and him too only for his ceasing to be so. Whose courses, if we reflect upon, we shall see his prodigality bringing him from his revelling companions, and his riotous meats, to the swine and to the trough ; and from imitating their sensuality, by a natural consequence to take up with their diet too. Prodigality is the devil's steward and purse-bearer, ministering to all sorts of vice ; and it is hard, if not impossible, for a prodigal person to be guilty of no other vice, but prodigality. For men generally are prodigal, because they are first intemperate, luxurious, or ambitious. And these, we know, are vices too brave and costly to be kept at an easy rate ; they must have large pensions, and be fed with both hands, though the man who feeds them *starves* for his pains. From whence it is evident, that that which only retrenches the supplies of these gaping, boundless appetites, is so far from deserving the ugly name of avarice, that it is a noble instrument of virtue, a step to grace, and a great preparation of nature for religion. In a word, so far as *parsimony* is a part of *prudence*, it can be no part of *covetousness*.

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Covetousness implies in it a *rapacity in getting* ; when men (as it were) with open mouth fly upon the prey ; and catch with that eagerness, as if they could

never open their hands wide enough, nor reach them out far enough, to compass the objects of their boundless desires. So that, had they (as the fable goes of *Briareus*) each of them an hundred hands, they would all of them be employed in *grasping* and gathering, and hardly one of them in *giving* or *laying* out; but all in *receiving*, and none in *restoring*; a thing in itself so monstrous, that nothing in nature besides is like it, except it be *death* and the *grave*. This ravenous, vulture-like disposition, the wise man expresses, by making *haste to be rich*, adding withal, that he who does so, *shall not be innocent*. Hence it is, that we see some estates, like *mushrooms*, spring up in a night, and some who were *begging* or *borrowing* at the beginning of the year, ready to be *purchasers* before it comes about. But this is by no means the course or method of nature; the advances of which are still gradual, and scarce discernible in their motions, but only visible in their issue. For no body perceives the grass grow, or the shadow move upon the dial, till after some time and leisure we reflect upon their *progress*.

Upon the whole matter, the *greedy getter* is like the *greedy eater*; it is possible, that by taking in too fast, he may choke or surfeit, but he will hardly nourish and strengthen himself, or serve any of the noble purposes of nature, which rather intends the security of his health, than the gratification of his appetite.

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When God calls needy, hungry persons to places and opportunities of raising their fortunes, (a thing which of late has happened very often,) it concerns them to think seriously of the greatness of the temptation which is before them, and to consider the danger of a *full table* to a person ready to *starve*. But generally such, as in this manner step immediately out of *poverty* into *power*, know no bounds, but are intolerable in their exactions. So that *Solomon* most ele-

gantly compares a *poor man oppressing the poor*, to a *sweeping rain which leaves no food*; a rain which carries off all clean before it; the least finger of a poor oppressor being heavier than the loins of a rich one; for while one is contented to fleece the skin, the other strips the *very bones*; and all this to redeem the time of his former poverty, and at one leap (as it were) to pass into a full and magnificent condition. Though, for the most part, the righteous judgment of God overtakes such persons in the issue, and commonly appoints this for their lot, *that estates sudden in the getting, are but short in the continuance*. They rose (as I shew) like *land-floods*, and like them they fell.

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Covetousness commands in chief, in most of the insurrections and murders which have infested the world; and most of the perjuries and *pious frauds* which have shamed down religion, and even dissolved society, have been resolved into the commanding dictates of this vice. So that, whatsoever has been pretended, gain has still been the thing aimed at, both in the grosser outrages of an open violence, and the sanctified rogueries of a more refined dissimulation. None ever acted the traitor and the *Judas* expertly, and to the purpose, but still there was a *quid dabitur* behind the curtain. Nay, so mighty a sway does this pecuniary interest bear even in matters of religion, that *toleration* itself, (as sovereign a virtue as it is said to be of, for preserving order in the church,) yet, without *contribution*, would hardly be able to support the separate meetings of the dissenting brotherhood; but that, if the people should once grow sullen, and shut up their purses, it is shrewdly to be feared, that the preachers themselves would shut up the conventicles too: At present, 'tis confessed, the trade is quick and gainful, but still, like other trades, not to be carried on without money. Gold is the best cordial to keep the *good old cause* in heart; and there is little danger of its *fainting*, and

much less of *starving*, with so much of that in its pocket.

The truth is, covetousness is a vice of such superintendency over all other vices, that it will serve *its turn*, even by those, which at first view seem most contrary to it. So that it will command votaries to itself, even out of the tribe of *Epicurus*, and make *uncleanness*, *drunkenness*, and *intemperance* itself minister to its designs; for let a man be but rich and great, and there shall be enough to humour him in his *lusts*, that they may go sharers with him in his *wealth*; enough to carouse with him, if by *drinking* with him, they may come also to *eat*, and drink, and live *upon him*, and by *creeping* into his bosom, to get into his pocket too; so that we need not go to the cozening, lying, perjured shop-keeper, who will curse himself into hell forty times over, to gain two-pence or three-pence in the pound extraordinary, and sits retailing away heaven and salvation for pence and half-pence, and seldom vends any commodity, but he sells his soul with it, like brown paper, into the bargain. I say, we need not go to these forlorn wretches, to find where the covetous man dwells, for sometimes we may find him also in a clean contrary disguise, perhaps gallanting it with his ladies; or drinking and roaring, and shaking his elbow in a tavern with some rich young cully by his side; who, from his dull, rustic, converse, (as some will have it,) is newly come to town to see fashions, and know men (forsooth;) and having newly buried his father in the country, to give his estate a more honourable burial in the city.

In short, the covetous person puts on all shapes, runs through all professions, haunts all places, and makes himself expert in the mystery of all vices, that he may the better pay his devotions to his god, *Mammon*. And so, in a quite different way from that of the blessed apostle, *he becomes all things to all men*, that he may by *any means gain something*; for he

cares not much for *gaining persons*, where he can gain nothing else.

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The covetous person lives as if the world were made altogether for him, and not he for the world. Charity is accounted no grace with him, nor gratitude any virtue. The cries of the poor never enter into his ears; or if they do, he has always one ear readier to let them out, than the other to take them in. So that it is a question, whether his heart be *harder*, or his fist closer. In a word, he is a pest and a monster; greedier than the *sea*, and barrener than the *shore*; a scandal to religion, and an exception from common humanity.

Creditor and *debtor* divide the world, and he who is not one, is certainly the other. But the covetous wretch does not only shut his hand to the poor in point of *relief*, but to others also in point of *debt*. Upon which account, the apostle *James* upbraids the rich men, *Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which of you is kept back, crieth: These, it seems, being the men who allow neither servants nor workmen any other wages, than (as the saying is) their labour for their pains.*

The truth is, the covetous person is so bad a paymaster, that he lives and dies as much a debtor to himself, as to any one else; his own *back* and *belly* having an action of debt against him; while he pines, and pinches, and denies himself, not only in the accommodations, but also in the very necessities of nature; with the greatest nonsense imaginable, living a *beggar*, that he may die *rich*, and leave behind him a mass of money, valuable upon no other account in the world, but as it is an instrument to command and procure to a man those conveniences of life, which such an one voluntarily deprives himself of.

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Covetousness is apt to prevail upon the minds of

men, by reason of the *reputation* which riches generally give men in the world, by whatsoever ways or means they were gotten. It is a very great, though sad and scandalous truth, that rich men are at the very same time esteemed and honoured, while the ways, by which they grew rich, are abhorred and detested : For how is griping avarice exclaimed against ? How is oppression branded all the world over ! All mankind seems agreed to run them down ; and yet, what addresses are made, what respects shown, what high encomiums given, to a wealthy miser, to a rich and flourishing oppressor ! The lucky effect seems to have atoned for, and sanctified its vile cause ; and the basest thing covered with gold, lies hid itself, and shines with the lustre of its covering.

Virtue, charity, and generosity, are indeed splendid names, and look bright in sermons and panegyrics, which few regard : But when we come to practice and common life, virtue, if poor, is but a sneaking thing, looked upon disdainfully, and treated coldly ; and when charity brings a man to need charity, he must be content with the scraps from the table of the rich miser, or the great oppressor. For no invitations are now made, like that in the gospel, where messengers are sent with tickets to bring in guests *from the hedges and highways*. No, it is not the way in our days to spread tables, or furnish out banquets for the poor and the blind, the hungry and the indigent. For in our times, (to the just shame of the fops our ancestors, as some call them,) full *bellies* are still oftenest feasted ; *and to them who have shall be given, and they shall have more abundantly*. This is the way of the world ; be the discourse of it what it will.

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As for covetousness, we may truly say of it, that it makes both the *alpha* and *omega* in the devil's alphabet, and that it is the first vice in corrupt nature which moves, and the last which dies. For look upon

any infant, and as soon as it can but move an hand, we shall see it reaching out after something or other, which it should not have ; and he who does not know it to be the proper and peculiar sin of old age, seems himself to have the dotage of that age upon him, whether he has the years or no. For, who so intent upon the world commonly, as those who are just going out of it ? Who so diligent in heaping up wealth, as those who have neither will nor time to spend it ?

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Men are frequently forced to make their way to great possessions, by the commission of great sins, and therefore the happiness of life cannot possibly consist in them. It has been a saying, and a remarkable one it is, *that there is no man very rich, but is either an unjust person himself, or the heir of one or other who was so.* I dare not pronounce so severe a sentence universally : For I question not, but through the good Providence of God, some are as innocently, and with as good a conscience, rich, as others can be poor : But the general baseness and corruption of men's practices has verified this harsh saying of too many ; and it is every day seen, how many serve the *god* of this world, to obtain the *riches* of it. 'Tis true, the full reward of a man's unjust dealing never reaches him in this life ; but if he has not sinned away all the tenderness and apprehensiveness of his conscience, the grudges and regrets of it will be still like *death in the pot*, and give a sad grumbling allay to all his comforts ; nor shall his heart ever find any entire, clear, unmixed content in the wealth he has got, when he shall reflect upon the manner of his getting it ; and assure him, that nothing of all that, which he possesses in the world, is yet *paid for* ; so that, if the justice of God should exact his soul in payment of that vast score, which his sinful gains have run him into, when this sad debt came once to be cleared off, who then would be the gainer ; or what could *be got*, when the soul *was lost* ?

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The very management of a great estate is a greater and more perplexing trouble, than any that a poor man can be subject to. He, who is vastly rich, must live like one who is so; and whosoever does that, makes himself thereby a *great host*, and his house a *great inn*; where the noise, the trouble, and the charge, is sure to be his, but the enjoyment (if there be any) descends upon the persons entertained by him; nay, and upon the very servants of his family, whose business is only to please their master, and live upon him, while the master's business is to please all that come about him, and sometimes to fence against them too. For a *gainer* by all his costs and charges, he shall never be. Such being the temper of most men in the world, that though they are never so generously entertained, yet they are not to be *obliged*; but go away, rather *envying* their entertainer's *greatness*, than *acknowledging his generosity*.

DISCOURSE XIII.

OF FALSEHOOD AND LYING.—*Prov. xii. 22.*

I am sensible, that by discoursing of lies and falsehood, I must needs fall into a very large common place ; though yet, not by half so large and common as the practice : nothing in nature being so universally decried, and withal so universally practised, as falsehood. So that most of those things, that have the mightiest and most controlling influence upon the affairs and course of the world, are neither better nor worse, than downright lies. For, what is common fame, which sounds from all quarters of the world, and resounds back to them again, but generally a loud, rattling, impudent, over-bearing lie ? What are most of the *histories* of the world, but lies ? lies immortalized, and consigned over as a perpetual abuse and flam upon posterity ? What are most of the *promises* of the world, but lies ? Of which we need no other proof but our own experience. And what are most of the *oaths* in the world, but lies ? And such as need rather a pardon for being took, than a dispensation from being kept ? And lastly, what are all the *religions* of the world, except Judaism and Christianity, but lies ? And even in Christianity itself, are there not those who teach, warrant, and defend lying ? and scarce use the bible for any other purpose, but to *swear upon it*, and to *lie against it* ?

Thus a mighty, governing lie goes round the world, and has almost banished truth out of it ; and so reign-

ing triumphantly in its stead, is the true source of most of those confusions, and dire calamities, that infest the universe. For look over them all and you shall find that the greatest annoyance of mankind, has been from one of these two things, *force* or *fraud*. Of which, as boisterous and violent a thing as force is, yet it rarely achieves any thing considerable, but under the conduct of fraud. *Slight of hand* has done that, which *force of hand* could never do.

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Plato accounted it lawful for statesmen and governors ; and so did *Cicero* and *Plutarch* ; and the *Stoicks* (as some say) reckoned it amongst the perfections of a wise man, to lie dexterously, in due time and place. And for some of the ancient doctors of the Christian church ; such as *Origen*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tertulian*, *Lactantius*, and *Crysostom* ; and generally, all before *St. Austin*, several passages have fallen from them, that speak but too favourably of this ill thing. So that *Paul Layman*, a *Romish* casuist, says, that it is a *truth* but lately known, and received in the world, *that a lie is absolutely sinful and unlawful* ; I suppose, he means, that part of the world, where the scriptures are not read, and where men care not to know, what they are not willing to practise.

But then, for the mitigation of what has proceeded from these great men, we must take in that known and celebrated Division of a *lie* into those three several kinds of it. As 1. *The pernicious lie*, uttered for the hurt or disadvantage of our neighbour. 2. *The officious lie*, uttered for our own, or our neighbour's advantage. And 3. and lastly, *The ludicrous and jocose lie*, uttered only for mirth's sake, in common converse. Now for the first of these, which is the *pernicious lie*, it was, and is universally condemned by all ; but the other two have found some patronage from the writings of those fore-mentioned authors.

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To pass from thence* to fanatic treachery, that is, from one twin to the other ; how came such multitudes of our own nation, at the beginning of that monstrous rebellion, to be spunged of their plate and money, rings and jewels, for the carrying on of the schismatical, dissenting, king-killing cause ? Why, next to their own love of being cheated, it was the public faith of faithless miscreants that drew them in. And, how came so many thousands to fight, and die in the same rebellion ? Why, they were deceived into it by those spiritual trumpeters, who followed them with continual alarms of damnation, if they did not venture life, fortune and all, in that which wickedly and devilishly those impostors called, *The cause of God*. So that I myself have heard one say (whose quarters have since hung about that city, where he first had been deceived) that he with many more, went to that execrable war with such a controlling horror upon their spirits, from those sermons,† that they verily believed they should have been accursed by God forever, if they had not acted their part in that dismal tragedy.

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Where *fraud* and *falsehood*, like a plague or cancer, comes once to invade society, the band which held together the parts compounding it, presently breaks ; and men thereby put to a loss where to league, and to fasten their dependences ; and so are forced to scatter, and shift every one for himself. Upon which account, every notoriously false person ought to be looked upon as a *public enemy*, to be pursued as a wolf, or a mad dog, and a disturber of the common peace and welfare of mankind. There being no person whatsoever, but has his private interest concerned, and endangered in the mischief that such a wretch does to the public.

For look into great families, and you shall find some

[* That is, Popish.—Ed.]

† Col. Axtell ; he particularly mentioned those of Brooks and Calamy.

one false, paltry tale-bearer, who, by carrying stories from one to another, shall inflame the minds, and discompose the quiet of the whole family. And from families pass to towns or cities ; and two or three *pragmatical, intriguing, meddling* fellows (*men of business* some call them) by the venom of their false tongues, shall set the whole neighbourhood together by the ears. Where men practise falsehood, and shew tricks with one another, there will be perpetual suspicions, evil surmisings, doubts, and jealousies, which, by souring the minds of men, are the bane and pest of society.

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Though some have been apt to account none sinful, but such as wallow in the mire of gross sensuality, yet, no doubt, deceit, falsehood and hypocrisy, are more directly contrary to the very essence of religion, and carry in them more of the express image and superscription of the devil, than any bodily sins whatsoever. How did that *false, fasting, imperious, self-admiring*, or rather, *self-adoring* hypocrite (*St. Luke*, xviii. 11.) crow over the poor publican ! *God, I thank thee*, says he, *that I am not like other men* ; and, God forbid (say I) that there should be many others like him, for a glistering out-side, and a noisome in-side, for *tything mint and cummin*, and for *devouring widow's houses* ; that is, for taking ten parts from his neighbour and putting God off with one. After all which, had this man of merit and mortification been called to account for his ungodly swallow in gorging down the estates of helpless *widows* and *orphans*, it is odds, but he would have told you, that it was all for charitable uses, and to afford pensions for *spies* and *proselytes*.

DISCOURSE XIV.

OF ENVY.—James iii. 26.

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The *wealth or plenty of another* is a ground or motive of envy. No man willingly would be poor, and no envious person would have *another rich*; every one who is remarkably so, being commonly looked upon but as a kind of *injury* to all the poor ones about him; not that he does or ever did them any injury, but that by being rich, he is reckoned one himself. For whosoever has a great deal to lay up, will be always an intolerable grievance to him who has nothing to spend; and to look upon a full bag, and to have nothing to do with it, is no small mortification to such a one. The learned *Terulam* observes, that diseases arising from emptiness, are generally the most dangerous, and most hardly cured; and amongst the diseases of the mind, envy, grounded upon domestic penury, is certainly of the same nature; especially where a neighbouring opulence shews what the remedy is, but not how it may be had; like the thirst of *Tantalus*, where the thing thirsted for was near enough, and yet out of reach too. And in such a case envy will be sure to work and boil up to a more than ordinary height; while the envious person frets, and raves, and swells at the plenty and affluence of his abounding neighbour, and (as I may so express it) is even ready to burst with another's *fulness*.

What made the devil (the grand exemplar of envy) so much malign *Job*, but the bounties of Providence to him in a large estate, great revenues, and a flour-

ishing family, and all of them watched over and guarded by the wakeful eye and the powerful hand of him who gave them. And no doubt, the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, with the rest of his good neighbours (who did such terrible execution upon all that belonged to him) were acted and led on by the same spirit. They could not brook the splendor and greatness of so potent, and (as they thought) overgrown a neighbour. He was an eye-sore to them upon the throne, but (for all his noisome *ulcers*) none at all when they saw him upon the dunghill.

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In fine, if the envious person be poor and beggarly, he would have all about him as arrant beggars as himself; but if rich, he would have all beggars *but himself*; like *Gideon's* fleece, filled with the dew of heaven, and every thing else dry about it. And it is too well known to all the world, not to be justly detested by it, that there is a certain profession of men, who shall never cease to be maligned and persecuted, while there is any thing of revenue, either to support the dignity of their function, or procure a common respect to their persons; but they shall be followed with all the odious, false, and base imputations of pride, covetousness and luxury, still rattling about their ears, and whatsoever else the envy of a raging avarice, and a domineering insolence can belch out against them. But after all, I would gladly learn, wherein this monstrous pride and covetousness of the church shews itself. Why, in this, that the ministers of it are not yet clothed in rags or sackcloth, that the church itself is neither for *Naked Gospels*,* nor naked evangelists, and that her poor clergy can just (or very hardly) find enough to pay taxes, and other public duties, and yet make a shift to keep themselves from quite starving, or begging afterwards. This, this is the pride and

* See a vile book so entitled, and reflecting upon the clergy, though (to the shame of the author) written by a clergyman.

covetousness of our clergy. And then, lastly, for their luxury, that will be found (if at all) in their not being willing to lick the crumbs at the end of their rich neighbour's table, and much less under it ; that they scorn to sneak here and there for a dinner, or to *beg their daily bread* of any one, but of God himself.

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That every worth and virtue, which deservedly draws after it the highest panegyrics from some, often proves matter of the bitterest satires from others ; a very odd and strange thing, I confess ; but envy will easily unriddle the strangeness, and take off the wonder. The due consideration of all which has founded the truth of a saying, much more significant I own than believed, and more believed than practised ; namely, that he of all men lives the safest, who lies the closest ; and that none are so much out of the reach of the world, as those who are most out of the view of it too. For what is every step into the public, but a farther advance into danger ? an engaging in fresh troubles and contentions, and a drawing after one those eyes, which, like the basilisk, kill whatsoever they look upon, if but capable of worth enough *to be looked to death* by them. It is not safe for any one to be much commended, to be borne upon the wings of fame, and ride in triumph upon the tongues of men ; for the tongues of some do but provoke the teeth of more ; and men we know do much more heartily detract, than they use to commend.

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He, who will be envious, can design nothing but to make himself miserable, because he sees another happy ; he must resolve to be dejected and cast down, whensoever he sees his neighbour prosperous, and, as the poet describes envy, *ready to weep for this very cause, that she could see nothing to be wept at ; viz- que tenet lacrymas, quia nil lacrymabile cernit*. We need not seek for arguments to dissuade a man from

being envious upon the score of charity to his neighbour, but even of love to himself. Let him but be prevailed upon not to be his own tormentor, and his envy will be at an end. Let not his neighbour's rest break his *sleep*. Let not his friend's fortune, or reputation, make him out of love with himself, and neglect his own. For why may not I come in as a *sharer*, instead of being a maligner of his joy and felicity? for as much as there is a real pleasure in the congratulation of another's good; the very society of joy redoubling it: so that while it lights directly upon my friend, it rebounds upon myself; and the brighter his candle burns, the more easily will it light mine. Whensoever the *Romans* conquered an enemy, it was indeed the general himself only, who was said to triumph, but the whole army and all the people equally rejoiced. But the envious person will bear no part in the festivals of a public mirth: he shuts himself up and snarls, while others laugh and sing. And if all the world were of this temper, it would be an useless (which yet has ever been accounted the noblest) property of good, that it naturally spreads and diffuses itself abroad.

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The effects of envy in respect of the object of it;

1. *A busy, curious enquiry, or prying into* all the concerns of the person envied and maligned: and this no doubt, only as a step to those farther mischiefs, which envy assuredly drives at. For no man enquires into another's concerns, or makes it his business to acquaint himself with his privacies, but with a design to do him some shrewd turn or other. Such an eye is never idle, but always looking about to see, where a man lies open to a blow. It is withal an indefatigable teller and hearer of base stories. It is this blessed quality, forsooth, that so insinuates into families, that puts them upon hiring servants to betray their masters, and inveigling one friend, if possibly they can, to supplant

another : it is this, that listens at doors and windows, that catches at every breath or whisper, that is stirring, &c.

2. *Detraction.* We have already seen the first effort made by it, by an insidious diving into his (the envied person's) most secret affairs, and the next to this always works out at the mouth ; so that if a man cannot overbear his neighbour by downright violence of action, he will attempt it at least by vilifying expressions ; and that there may not want art, as well as malice, to carry on the attack more sure and home. Has a man done bravely, and got himself a reputation too great to be borne down by any base and direct aspersions ? Why then, envy will seemingly subscribe to the general vogue in most things, but then it will be sure to come over him again with a sly, oblique stroke in some derogating [*but*] or other, and so slide in some scurvy exception, which shall effectually stain all his other virtues ; and, like the dead fly in the apothecary's ointment, which (*Solomon* tells us) never fails to give the whole an offensive savour. And, peradventure, to weave the dissimulation with yet a finer thread, and so to make it the more artificial, and less discernible, the disgrace shall be insinuated, and cast in with words of pity. As, after a man has been commended in company for several good qualities, the sneaking, envious wretch shall then put in, and seem to assent to every thing so spoken of him ; but shall add withal, what an unhappiness is it, that a person endued with such accomplishments should be so unluckily surprised, as to be guilty of such or such actions ? And that there should be any thing to allay or blemish the clearness of his reputation ? When perhaps the rest of the company were wholly ignorant of any such matter, had not his malicious, ill-favoured *pity* brought it fresh into remembrance. This is the way, which envy takes to undermine a man's honour, when the universal vogue of men is on his side, &c.

DISCOURSE XV.

OF FLATTERY.—*Prov. xxix. 5.*

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Every flatterer, in all his fawnings and dissimulations, is acted by these two grand purposes : 1. To serve himself ; 2. To undermine him whom he flatters, and thereby to effect his ruin.

1. He designs to benefit himself. In all that artificial scene that he lays, by adoring and commending this or that great person, he intends not so much to *praise* as to *be* what the other is. He would be great, rich and honourable ; and that puts him upon the dissembler's drudgery to enslave himself to all his humours ; to extol his impertinences, and adore his very villanies. It is not for want of wit or apprehension that the flatterer speaks such paradoxes ; for he sees through that great and glorious bauble that he so cringes to ; he despises him heartily, while he harangues him magnificently : his thoughts and his words are at a perpetual jar and distance ; he thinks satires, while he speaks panegyrics.

Nay, and perhaps he abhors his own ill fate too, that should force him to take such a sordid course to advance himself ; that should make him fall down before such an image, and worship such an illustrious piece of emptiness. But profit reconciles evil minds to the coarsest services ; and men are willing to stoop down to take up a jewel, or a piece of gold, though it be from a dunghill.

But it is evident, that every flatterer designs only his

own advantage, whether there be or be not any real foundation of worth in him whom he pretends to admire ; and that from this one consideration, that the same person, in case he falls from his greatness, is presently deserted. The man's virtue, if he had any, remains untouched, and perhaps by his calamity improved. He can be as valiant, as just and temperate, as he was before ; but what is that to the purpose ? He cannot reward or prefer : he cannot frown an enemy into ruin, or smile a friend, or a dependant, into a fair fortune ? And if so, the flatterer thinks he should but lose his time and his breath to declaim, and be eloquent, upon so dry a subject. No ; his game lies another way ; he bids *good-night* to the *setting*, and reserves his devotion for the *rising* sun. Men may be both wise and virtuous ; but it is their power that makes them commended for being so.

And from this it is also, that we may observe in flatterers such great difference in the behaviour of the same person at one time, from what it is at another. While he is yet upon the chace, and a getting, none so humble, so abject, so full of all servile compliances ; but when his nest is feathered, and his bags full, he can be insolent and haughty, he can bend his knee as stiffly, and keep his distance as magisterially as another. For, like Saul, after he comes to a crown, he then presently finds in himself another spirit, and disdains to look after those asses, that he used formerly so much to follow. Let his old rich patrons now commend themselves ; he has served his turn of them, caught the fish, and he cares for no more. After the young one is grown up, and well thriven, it follows the dam no longer ; but instead of following it, if occasion serves, it can kick it.

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2. The flatterer undermines, and perhaps, in the issue, ruins him whom he flatters, by bringing him to shame, and a general contempt ; for he deals with him like

one that pins some ridiculous thing upon another's back, and then sends him with it into the market-place, where he finds himself hooted and laughed at by all ; but walks on, wholly ignorant of the cause. The flatterer tells an impertinent talking grandee, that his discourse wonderfully becomes him ; that he utters himself with extraordinary grace and exactness of speech ; he accordingly believes him, and gives his tongue no rest, but is still proclaiming his emptiness and indiscretion in all companies. He tells another passionate furioso, that it argues gallantry of spirit, not to endure the least undervaluing word, the least shadow of an affront, and he accordingly, upon every trivial occasion, takes fire, and flames out into all the expressions of rage and revenge ; and, for his pains, is despised by some, hated by others, and-opposed by all ; and these are the effects and favours of flattery. In a word ; the flatterer deals with the flattered person, as the Philistines did with Sampson, first putting out his eyes, and then making him a sport, to all that had a mind to divert themselves with his calamity.

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The perverse imitation of any one's defects or vices, seems to carry it (flattery) higher than the former, forasmuch as actions are much more considerable than words or discourses.

But surely few would be so sottish and servile, as to break a leg or an arm, or put out an eye, because they see the great person whom they depend upon and adore, deprived of any of these parts. And if so, do they not consider, that a man is to be more tender of his manners, and the dignity of his soul, than of any thing that belongs to his body, which would give him but a small preeminence above the brutes, were it not animated by a principle of reason ?

Every kind of imitation speaks the person that imitates inferior to him whom he imitates, as the copy is to the original ; but then to imitate that which is mean,

base and unworthy, is to do one of the lowest actions in a yet lower instance ; it is to climb downwards, to employ art and industry to learn a defect and an imperfection ; which is a direct reproach to reason, and a contradiction to the methods of nature.

And so much the more intolerable is it, because such persons are seldom seen to imitate the excellencies and the virtues of him whom they flatter ; these are looked upon with distance and lazy admiration ; but if there be any vice that sullies and takes off from the lustre of his other good qualities, that shall be sure to be culled out, and writ upon their lives and behaviour. Alexander had enough to imitate him in his drunkenness and his passion, who never intended to be like him, either in his chastity, or his justice to his enemies, and his liberality to his friends. And it is reported of Plato, that being crook-shouldered, his scholars, who so much admired him, would endeavour to be like him, by bolstering out their garments on that side, that so *they* might appear crooked too. It is probable that many of these found it easier to imitate Plato's shoulders than his philosophy ; and to stuff out their gowns, than to furnish their understandings, or improve their minds.

DISCOURSE XVI.

OF INGRATITUDE.—*Judges viii. 34, 35.*

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THERE is not any one vice, or ill quality, incident to the mind of man, against which the world has raised such a loud and universal outcry, as against ingratitude ; a vice never mentioned by any heathen writer, but with a particular height of detestation : and of such a malignity, that human nature must be stripped of humanity itself, before it can be guilty of it. It is in stead of all other vices ; and, in the balance of morality, a counterpoise to them all. In the charge of ingratitude, *omnia dixeris* : It is one great blot upon all morality : It is all in a word : It says *amen* to the black roll of sins : It gives completion and confirmation to them all.

Thanks are a tribute payable by the poorest : The most forlorn *widow* has her *two mites* ; and there is none so indigent, but has an heart to be sensible of, and a tongue to express its sense of a benefit received.

For surely, nature gives no man a mouth to be always eating, and never saying grace ; nor any hand only to grasp, and to receive : But as it is furnished with teeth for the one, so it should have a tongue also for the other ; and the hands that are so often reached out to take, and to accept, should be sometimes lifted up also to bless. The world is maintained by intercourse ; and the whole course of nature is a great exchange, in which one good turn is, and ought to be, the stated price of another.

If you consider the universe as one body, you shall find society and conversation to supply the office of the blood and spirits ; and it is gratitude that makes them circulate : Look over the whole creation, and you shall see, that the band or cement that holds together all the parts of this great and glorious fabric, is gratitude, or something like it ; You may observe it in all the elements ; for does not the air feed the flame ? And does not the flame at the same time warm and enlighten the air ? Is not the sea always sending forth as well as taking in ? And does not the earth quit scores with all the elements, in the noble fruits and productions that issue from it ? and in all the light and influence that the heavens bestow upon this lower world, though the lower world cannot equal their benefaction, yet, with a kind of grateful return, it reflects those rays, that it cannot recompense ; so that there is some return however, though there can be no requital. He, who has a soul wholly void of gratitude, should do well to set his soul to learn of his body ; for all the parts of that minister to one another. The hands and all the other limbs labour to bring in food and provision to the stomach, and the stomach returns what it has received from them in strength and nutriment, diffused into all the parts and members of the body. It would be endless to pursue the like allusions.

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You may rest upon this as a proposition of an eternal, unfailing truth ; that there neither is, nor ever was, any person remarkably ungrateful, who was not also insufferably proud ; nor convertibly any one proud, who was not equally ungrateful. For, as snakes breed in dunghills not singly, but in knots, so in such base, noisome hearts, you shall ever see *pride* and *ingratitude* indivisibly *wreathed, and twisted together*. *Ingratitude overlooks all kindnesses, but it is, because pride makes it carry its head so high.*

See the greatest examples of ingratitude equally no-

torious for their pride and ambition. And to begin with the top and father of them all, the devil himself. That excellent and glorious nature which God had obliged him with, could not prevent his ingratitude and apostacy, when his pride bid him aspire to an equality with his Maker, and say, *I will ascend, and be like the Most High.* And did not our first parents write exactly after his copy? Ingratitude making them to trample upon the command, because pride made them desire *to be as gods*, and to brave Omniscience itself in the knowledge of *good and evil*? What made that ungrateful wretch, *Absalom*, kick at all the kindnesses of his indulgent father, but because his ambition would needs be fingering the scepter, and hoisting him into his father's throne? And in the courts of princes is there any thing more usual, than to see those that have been raised by the favour and interest of some great minister, to trample upon the steps by which they rose, to rival him in his greatness, and at length (if possible) to step into his place?

In a word, *ingratitude is too base to return a kindness*, and *too proud to regard it*; much like the tops of mountains, barren indeed, but yet lofty; they produce nothing, they feed no body, they clothe no body, yet are high and stately, and look down upon all the world about them.

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The only voice of ingratitude is, *Give, Give*; but when the gift is once received, then like the swine at his trough, it is silent and insatiable. In a word, the ungrateful person is a monster, which is *all* throat and belly; a kind of thorough-fare, or common-shore for the good things of the world to pass into; and of whom, in respect of all kindnesses conferred on him, may be verified that observation of the lion's den; before which, appeared the footsteps of many that had gone in thither, but no prints of any that ever came out thence. The ungrateful person is the only thing in nature, for which

no body living is the better. He lives to himself, and subsists by the good nature of others, of which he himself has not the least grain.

The greatest favours to such an one, are but like the motion of a ship upon the waves; they leave no trace, no sign behind them; they neither soften, nor win upon him; they neither melt, nor endear him, but leave him as hard, as rugged, and as unconcerned as ever. All *kindnesses* descend upon such a temper, as showers of rain, or rivers of fresh water falling into the dead sea: The sea swallows them all, but is not at all changed, or sweetened by them. I may truly say of the mind of an ungrateful person, that it is *kindness-proof*. It is impenetrable by that, which conquers all things else, even by love itself. Flints may be melted, (we see it daily,) but an ungrateful heart cannot; no, not by the strongest and the noblest flame. And the reason is manifest; for you may remember, that I told you, that ingratitude sprang from a principle of *ill-nature*; which being a thing founded in such a certain constitution of blood and spirit, shall prevent all remedies that can be applied by education, and leaves such a bias upon the mind, as is before-hand with all instruction.

So that you shall seldom meet with an ungrateful person, but if you trace him up to his original, you will find that he was *born so*; and if you could look forward enough, it is a thousand to one, but you would find, that he also *dies so*; the thread that nature spins, is seldom broken off by any thing, but death.

DISCOURSE XVII.

CHRIST'S PROMISE, THE SUPPORT OF HIS MINISTERS.
Luke xxi. 15.

* * * * *

THE christian ministry is a troublesome and a disgustful institution, and as little regarded by men as they regard their souls, but rather hated as much as they love their sins. The church is every one's prey, and the shepherds are pilled, and polled, and fleeced by none more than by their own flocks. A prophet is sure to be without honour, not only in his own country, but almost in every one else. I scarce ever knew any ecclesiastic but was treated with scorn and distance; and the only peculiar respect I have observed shown such persons in this nation, (which yet, I dare say, they could willingly enough dispense with,) is, that sometimes a clergyman of an hundred pound a year has the honour to be taxed equal to a layman of ten thousand. Even those who pretend most respect to the church and churchmen, will yet be found rather to *use* than to *respect* them; and if at any time they do aught for them, or give any thing to them, it is not because they are really lovers of the church, but to serve some turn by being thought so. As some keep chaplains, not out of any concern for religion, but as it is a piece of grandeur something above keeping a coach; it looks creditable and great in the eyes of the world; though, in such cases he who serves at the altar, has generally as much contempt and disdain passed upon him, as he who serves in the kitchen, though perhaps not in the same way: If any regard be had to him, it

is commonly such an one as men have for a garment (or rather a pair of shoes) which fits them, *viz.* to wear him and wear him, till he is worn out, and then to lay him aside. For be the grandee he depends upon, never so powerful, he must not expect that he will do any thing for him, till it is scandalous not to do it. If a *first* or *second-rate* living chance to fall in his gift, let not the poor *domestic* think, either learning, or piety, or long service, a sufficient pretence to it; but let him consider with himself rather, whether he can answer that difficult question, *Who was Melchisedeck's father?** Or whether instead of *grace for grace*, he can bring *gift for gift*, for all other qualifications without it will be found empty and insignificant.

* * * * *

The true account of the pride of the clergy is, that they are able to clothe themselves with something better than rags; or rather, that they have any thing to clothe them at all, and that the church of *England* would (by its good will) neither have *naked gospels* nor *naked evangelists*. And then in the next place, the covetousness of the clergy is, that they can and do find wherewithal to *pay taxes*, and just enough to keep them from begging afterwards. And lastly, their luxury and intemperance lies in this, that they had rather eat at their own poor home, than lick up the crumbs at *the end* of their haughty neighbour's table, and much less *under* it; that they scorn to sneak here and there for a dinner, or beg their *daily bread* of any but of God himself: The world in the mean time proceeding by no other measure with the clergy than this, *viz.* to exact of them *hospitality to others*, and to grudge them *bread for themselves*.

* * * * *

Upon the whole, if we consider the treatment of the clergy in these nations, since popery was driven out,

* *A question very hardly solvable by a poor clergyman, though never so good a divine.*

both as to the language and usage which they find from most about them; I do, from all that I have read, heard, or seen, confidently aver, (and I wish I could speak it loud enough to reach all the corners of the world,) that there is no nation under heaven, christian or not christian, which despise, hate, and trample upon their clergy or priesthood comparably to the *English*. So that (as matters have been carried) it is really no small argument of the predominance of conscience over interest, that there are yet parents who can be willing to breed up any of their sons (if hopefully endowed) to so *discouraged* and *discouraging* a profession.

* * * * *

We find the apostles frequently and fiercely encountered by adversaries of very different persuasions, by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and the several sects belonging to both. * * * * But this *gainsaying* humour stopped not in the doctrine preached, but overflowed also upon the preachers themselves; and that in calumnies of all sorts; sometimes reproaching them as *drunkards*, (*Acts* ii. 13.) and thereby showing us, that the charge of *intemperance* upon the clergy was as early as the apostles, who had a liberal share of it; and not only so, but it began even upon Christ himself, who was taxed for a *glutton* and a *wine-bibber*, long before them; though (methinks) it looks something odd and unaccountable, that those should make the lame walk, and restore to others the use of their legs, who had drunk themselves off their own. They were traduced also as public incendiaries, and such as *turned the world upside down*; (*Acts* xvii. 6.) which yet (as the world then stood with idolatry at the head of it, and truth under foot) was perhaps the only way to restore it to its right posture. They were also jeered and flouted at, as *fools and babblers*. (*Acts* xvii. 18.) But why then did not those profound rabbies amongst the *Jews*, and the *Stoics* and *Epicureans*, (those *oracles of reason*),

amongst the philosophers, baffle these babblers, and so dashing their absurd doctrine in its first rise, prevent its spreading by a mature and thorough confutation? But it was ever an easier work to contradict, than to confute. From reproaching them as fools, they proceeded to represent them also as *madmen*. (*Acts* xxvi. 24. *2 Cor.* v. 13.) Though this, I confess, seems not so much a wonder to me, since I doubt not but the clergy in all ages (if but well beneficed) would be accused for *lunatics*, if for so doing, their accusers might be their *guardians*.

* * * * *

Nothing in nature can be imagined more absurd, and contrary to the very end of speaking, than an obscure discourse; for in that case the preacher may as well leave his *tongue*, and his auditors their *ears* behind them, as neither he communicates, nor they understand, any more of his mind and meaning after he has spoken to them, than they did before.

And yet as ridiculous as such fustian bombast from the pulpit is, none are so transported with it, as those who least understand it. For still the greatest admirers of it are the grossest, the most ignorant country people, who, of all men, are the fondest of high-flown metaphors and allegories, set off with scraps of *Greek* and *Latin*, though not able even to read so much of the latter, as might save their necks upon occasion.

To adorn and clothe the most important truths, is to cover them, and that, to obscure them. The eternal salvation and damnation of souls, are not things to be treated of with jests and witticisms. And he who thinks to furnish himself out of plays and romances with language for the pulpit, shows himself much fitter to act a part in the revels, than for a cure of souls.

I speak the words of soberness, said St. Paul. (*Acts* xxvi. 25.) And I preach the gospel not with the

enticing words of man's wisdom. (1 Cor. ii. 4.) This was the way of the apostles, discoursing of things sacred. Nothing here of the fringes of the north-star; nothing of nature's becoming unnatural; nothing of the down of angels' wings, or the beautiful locks of cherubims; no starched similitudes, introduced with a *Thus have I seen a cloud rolling in its airy mansion*, and the like. No, these were sublimities above the rise of the apostolic spirit. For the apostles, poor mortals, were content to take lower steps, and to tell the world in plain terms, *That he who believed, should be saved, and that he who believed not, should be damned.* And this was the dialect, which pierced the conscience, and made the hearers cry out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* It tickled not the ear, but sunk into the heart; and when men came from such sermons, they never commended the preacher for his taking voice or gesture; for the fineness of such a simile, or the quaintness of such a sentence; but they spoke like men conquered with the overpowering force of the most concerning truths; much in the words of the two disciples going to *Emmaus*; *Did not our hearts burn within us, while he opened to us the scriptures?*

In a word, the apostles' preaching was therefore mighty and successful, because plain, natural, and familiar, and by no means above the capacity of their hearers; nothing being more preposterous, than for those, who were professedly aiming at men's hearts, to miss the mark, by shooting over their heads.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

THE FATAL PERVERSION OF WORDS AND NAMES.

Isaiah v. 20.

* * * * *

From whence we infer the villanous falsehood of the opinion, or position, that *good* and *evil*, *honest* and *dishonest*, are originally founded in the laws and constitutions of the sovereign civil power, enjoining some things or actions, and prohibiting others. So that when any thing is found conducing to the welfare of the public, and thereupon comes to be enacted by governors into a law, it is forthwith thereby rendered *morally good* and *honest*; and, on the contrary, *evil* and *dishonest*, when, upon its contrariety to the public welfare, it stands condemned by the same public authority.

This was the opinion heretofore of *Epicurus*, as it is represented by *Gassendus*; who understood his notions too well, to misrepresent them: and lately, of *one* amongst ourselves, a less philosopher, though the greater heathen of the two, the infamous author of the *Leviathan*. And the like lewd, scandalous, and immoral doctrine, or worse (if possible) may be found in some writers of another kind of note; whom one would have thought, not only religion, but shame of the world might have taught better things.

* * * * *

There is hardly any order or degree of men, but more or less have been captivated and enslaved by words. It is a weakness, or rather a fate, which attends both high and low; the statesman, who holds the helm, as well as the peasant, who holds the plough. So that if ever you find an *ignoramus* in place and power, and

can have so little conscience, and so much confidence, as to tell him to his face, that he has a wit and an understanding above all the world beside; and *That what his own reason cannot suggest to him, neither can the united reason of all mankind put together* ;* I dare undertake, that, as fulsome a dose as you give him, he shall readily take it down, and admit the commendation, though he cannot believe the thing : *Bländitiæ etiam cum excluduntur, placent*, says *Seneca*. Tell him, that no history or antiquity can match his policies and his conduct; and presently, the sot (because he knows neither history, nor antiquity) shall begin to *measure himself by himself*, (which is the only sure way for him not to fall short) and so immediately amongst his *outward admirers, and his inward despisers*, vouched also by a *teste meipso*, he steps forth an exact politician: and, by a wonderful, and new way of arguing, proves himself *no fool*, because, forsooth, the sycophant, who tells him so, is an egregious knave.

But to give you yet a grosser instance of the force of words, and of the extreme vanity of man's nature in being influenced by them, hardly shall you meet with any person, man or woman, so aged, or ill-favoured, but if you will venture to commend them for their comeliness; nay, and for their youth too, though *time out of mind* is wrote upon every line of their face; yet they shall take it very well at your hands, and begin to think with themselves, that certainly they have some perfections, which the generality of the world are not so happy as to be aware of. .

* * * * *

In most things, *good* and *evil* lie shuffled and thrust up together in a confused heap; and it is study and intention of thought which must draw them forth, and range them under their distinct heads. But there can be no study, without *time*; and the mind must abide

* The words of a great self-opiniator, and a bitter reviler of the clergy.

and dwell upon things, or be always a stranger to the *inside* of them. . *Through desire* (says Solomon), *a man having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom*, (Prov. xviii. 12.) There must be leisure and a retirement, and a sequestration of a man's self from the noise and toil of the world : for truth scorns to be seen by eyes too much fixt upon inferior objects. It lies too deep to be fetcht up with the *plough*, and too close to be beaten out with the *hammer*. It dwells not in shops or work-houses ; nor till the late age was it ever known, that any one served seven years to a smith or a tailor, that he might at the end thereof proceed master of *any other arts*, but such as those trades taught him ; and much less that he should commence doctor, or divine, from the shop-board, or the anvil ; or from whistling to a team, come to preach to a congregation.

* * * * *

The most efficacious way to ruin any man, is to misrepresent him ; and it often so falls out, that it wounds on both sides, and not only mauls the person misrepresented, but him also, to whom he is misrepresented. Nothing can be imagined more destructive to society than this villanous practice. It is this which revives, and imitates that inhuman barbarity of the old heathen persecutors, wrapping up christians in the skins of wild beasts, that so they might be worried and torn in pieces by dogs. Do but paint an *angel* black, and that is enough to make him pass for a *devil*. *Let us blacken him, let us blacken him what we can*, said the miscreant Harrison,* of the blessed king upon the *wording* and drawing up his charge against his approaching trial. And when any man is to be run down, and sacrific-

* A preaching colonel of the parliament-army, and a chief actor in the murder of K. Charles the first : notable before, for having killed several after quarter given them by others, and using these words in the doing it, *Cursed be he who does the work of the Lord negligently*. He was by extraction a butcher's son ; and accordingly, in his practices all along, more a butcher than his father.

ed to the lust of his enemies, as that royal martyr was, even his *good* (according to the apostle's phrase) *shall be evil spoken of*. He must first be undermined, and then undone.

* * * * *

There is one thing which I cannot but observe upon them, as very material, and fit to be laid in their dish forever; which is this: that if any branch of the royal family has unhappily drank in any thing of the popish contagion, these who call themselves *true Protestants* (the Puritans), are of all men breathing the most improper to decry, or so much as to open their mouths against any such person upon that account. For they must thank themselves for it, who forcibly plucked the children out of the bosom of the best father, and the firmest protestant in the world, and sent them into foreign countries, there to converse with snares and traps, and to *support their* lives with the hazard of their faith, flying from such *Protestants* for safety and shelter amongst the *Papists*. A staggering consideration (let me tell you) to persons of such tender years.

But had that blessed prince been suffered to spin out the full thread of his innocent life in peace and prosperity, none had issued from his royal loins but what he himself would have tutored and bred up to such a knowledge of, and adherence to, the church of *England*, that it should not have been in the power of all the papists and jesuits under heaven to have shook them in their religion.

So that the great seducers were *Cromwell* and his fellow rebels, who by banishing the royal family, cast them into the very jaws of popery and seduction, and not only *led*, but *drove* them *into temptation*.

Upon the whole matter, we are eternally bound to thank our good God for all of the royal family that have not been perverted to popery; and to thank the rebels and fanatics if any have.

* * * * *

A misapplied word, by which these men have

done no small mischief to religion, is, their calling the late sacrilegious subversion of the whole frame of our church, by the name of *reformation*, &c.) * * *

But to give you a remarkable instance of what kind of sense of religion, these reformers of it have had from first to last : when that scandal to christianity, *Hugh Peters*, held a discourse with the arch-rebel, his master, upon the mutinying of the army about *St. Albans*, and things then seemed to be in a scurvy, doubtful posture, this wretch encouraged him, not to be dismayed with the discontents of the soldiery, but accosting him resolutely to go on, as he had done all along, and to *fox them a little more with religion*, and no doubt he should be able to carry his point at last. A blessed expression this, *fox them with religion!* and fit to come from the mouth of a noted preacher of religion, and a prime reformer of it also ; but however very suitable to the person that uttered it, who died as he lived, with a stupified, seared conscience, and went out of the world *foxed* with something else beside *religion*.

* * * * *

He who sets up for his *country*, against his *prince*, goes about to make the body thrive by the ruin of the head. Assuredly no man shews his zeal and love for his country, so much as he who does all he can to enable his *prince* both to *govern* and *protect* it ; which I am sure cannot be done, either by weakening or impoverishing him. This indeed has been the course taken by those great factors for sedition, who have shot that odious distinction, like a fiery dart, at the government, of the *court party*, and the *country party* ; for which the country may perhaps one day have as little cause to thank them, as they have at present to thank themselves. For I do not find, that by all their noise and heat they have made themselves so considerable, as to be thought worthy to *be taken off*. But whether they succeed this way or no, they know however that to be still mouthing out, *the interest of the country!* *the interest of the country!* is a sort of plausible well-

received cant, and a sweet morsel, which never fails to be readily swallowed by the gaping rout, who always love those men best who abuse them most.

* * * * *

Bodily abstinence, joined with a demure, affected countenance, is often called and accounted *piety and mortification*. Suppose a man entirely ambitious, and equally spiteful and malicious; one who poisons the ears of great men by venomous whispers, and rises by the fall of better men than himself; yet if he steps forth with a *Friday* look and a *Lenten* face, with a *blessed Jesu!* and a mournful ditty for the vices of the times: oh! then he is a saint upon earth; an *Ambrose*, or an *Augustine*; I mean not for that earthly trash of book-learning; (for alas! such are above that, or at least that's above them) but for zeal, and for fasting, for a devout elevation of the eyes, and an holy rage against other men's sins. And happy those ladies and religious dames characterized (2 *Tim.* iii. 6,) who can have such self-denying, thriving, able men for their confessors! and thrice happy those families where they vouchsafe to take their *Friday* nights' refreshments! and thereby demonstrate to the world, what christian abstinence, and what primitive self-mortifying rigour there is in forbearing a dinner, that they may have the better stomach to their supper.

In fine, the whole world stands in admiration of them; fools are fond of them, and wise men are afraid of them: they are talked of, they are pointed at; and as they order the matter, they draw the eyes of all men after them, and generally something else.

But as it is observed in greyhounds, that the thinness of their jaws does not at all allay the ravening fury of their appetite, there being no creature whose teeth are sharper, and whose feet are swifter when they are in pursuit of their prey; so wo be to that man who stands in the way of a meagre, mortified, fasting, sharp-set zeal, when it is in full chace of its spiritual game.

ANIMADVERSIONS

ON

GROTIUS'S APPLICATION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD CHAPTER
OF ISAIAH TO THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

[EXTRACT FROM A DISCOURSE.]

BUT how can this prophecy be made to agree to *Jeremy*? With what truth or propriety could he be said to have been *exalted, to have been very high, to have been stricken for our transgressions, and to have had the iniquity of us all laid upon him*? How could it be said of him, *Who shall declare his generation*? And that he *should see his seed and prolong his days*? And also that he *should divide the spoil with the mighty*? &c.

Why yes, says our expositor, *he was exalted and very high*, because the *Chaldeans* had him in admiration, which yet is more than we read of, and thanks to a good invention for it; though it must be confessed, that upon his being drawn out of the dungeon, he was something *higher* than he was before. In the next place *he was stricken for transgression, and had our iniquities laid upon him*, because by the injurious dealing of the *Jews* he was cruelly and unworthily used, as indeed all or most of the prophets were both before or after him. And then for that saying, *Who*

shall declare his generation? The meaning of that, we are told, is, *Who shall reckon his years?* for he shall live to be very aged; though yet we know no more of his age, but that he prophesied about *forty years*; whereas some others have prophesied much longer, and particularly *Hosea*, who prophesied about *fourscore*. As for the other expression of *seeing his seed, and prolonging his days*, that we are taught must signify, *that* he should see many of his converts in *Egypt*, where he should live for a long time. Though yet we read not of any one of those *converts*, nor of any such *prolonging* his days there, but that it is a constant tradition of antiquity that he died an untimely, disastrous death, being knocked on the head in *Egypt*, by his wicked countrymen, with a fuller's club. And in the last place, for *his dividing the spoil with the mighty*, that we are informed was fulfilled in this, that *Nebuzaradan*, captain of the *Chaldean* host (as we find it in *Jeremy* xl. 5.) gave him a *reward* and some victuals, (that is to say, a small supply or *modicum* of meat and money for his present support,) and *so sent him away*: A worthy, glorious *dividing the spoil* indeed, and much after the same rate that the poor may be said to divide the *spoil*, when they take their shares of what is given them at rich men's doors.

So then we have here an interpretation, but as for the sense of it, that, for aught I see, must shift for itself. But whether thus to drag and hale words both from sense and context, and then to squeeze whatsoever meaning we please out of them, be not (as I may speak with some change of the prophet's phrase) to *draw lies with cords* of blasphemy, and *nonsense*, as it were, with a *cart-rope*, let any sober and impartial hearer or reader be judge. For whatsoever titles the itch of *novelty* and *Socinianism* has thought fit to dignify such *immortal, incomparable, incomprehensible* interpreters with, yet if these interpretations ought to take place, the said prophecies (which all before Gro-

*tius** and the aforesaid rabby *Saadias*, unanimously fixed, in the first sense of them, upon the sole person of the *Messiah*) might have been actually fulfilled, and consequently the veracity of God in the said prophecies strictly accounted for, though *Jesus of Nazareth* had never been born. Which being so, would any one have thought that the author of the book *De veritate Religionis Christianæ, & De satisfactione Christi*, could be also the author of such interpretations as these? No age certainly ever produced a mightier man in all sorts of learning than *Grotius*, nor more happily furnished with all sorts of arms, both *offensive* and *defensive*, for the vindication of the christian faith, had he not in his *annotations* too frequently turned the edge of them the wrong way.

* Having had the opportunity and happiness of a frequent converse with Dr. *Pocock*, (the late *Hebrew* and *Arabic* professor to the university of *Oxon*, and the greatest master certainly of the eastern languages and learning, which this or any other age or nation has bred,) I asked him (more than once, as I had occasion) what he thought of *Grotius*'s exposition of *Isaiah* liii. and his application of that prophecy, in the first sense and design of it to the person of the prophet *Jeremy*? To which, smiling and shaking his head, he answered, Why, what else can be thought or said of it, but that in this, the *opiniator* over-ruled the *annotator*, and the man had a mind to indulge his fancy? This account gave that great man of it, though he was as great in *modesty* as he was in *learning*, (greater than which none could be,) and withal had a particular respect for *Grotius*, as having been personally acquainted with him. But the truth is, the matter lay deeper than so, for there was a certain party of men whom *Grotius* had unhappily engaged himself with, who were extremely disgusted at the book *De satisfactione Christi*, written by him against *Socinus*, and therefore he was to pacify (or rather satisfy) these men by turning his pen another way in his *annotations*, which also was the true reason that he never answered *Crellius*; a shrewd argument, no doubt, to such as shall well consider these matters, that those in the Low-Countries, who at that time went by the name of *Remonstrants* and *Arminians*, were indeed a great deal more.

ANIMADVERSIONS

ON

SHERLOCK'S VINDICATION OF THE TRINITY.

[FROM THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CHAPTERS.]

* * * * * Though in all controversies, how sharp soever on both sides, and just on one, there is still a duty, which every man owes both to decency and to himself, always obliging him to utter only such things as may become him to speak ; yet, as to the adversary himself, it is, no doubt, a course justifiable beyond all exception, to take one's measures of treating him, from the measures he has allowed himself of dealing with others. And, as I hope, for my own, and the church's sake, to acquit myself as to the former part of the rule, so let my adversary take his lot as to the other. For I doubt not but to satisfy the world, (were it not superabundantly, from his own writings, satisfied already,) that he is a person of such an insufferable insolence both of style and temper, that all, that he has met with in the foregoing chapters, has by no means paid off his scores.

* * * * *

As to which, we shall first of all see him preferring himself before all the fathers, as *much happier in giving an explication of the Trinity than they were* ; and this, in such a fleering, scoptical way, (scoptical I mean as to the *fathers*, but highly commendatory of himself,) that it would even turn one's stomach to read his fulsome expressions. For he tells us, and that with

the most profound humility; no doubt, (p. 101.) *If that explication which I have given, be very consistent with, nay, be the true interpretation of that account the ancients give of a Trinity in Unity, I hope it will not be thought an unpardonable novelty, if I have expressed the same thing in other words, which give us a more clear and distinct apprehension of it, &c.* No; for his comfort, no; to outdo all the fathers (if a man can do it) can be no fault at all. But before this be allowed him, I do here require him to name me but one (who acknowledges a Trinity) in the whole world, besides his own modest *self*, who ever preferred his explication of the Trinity for the *happiness and intelligibility of it*, before that given by the fathers. I say, let him produce me so much as one affirming this, if he can. So that, in short, the comparison here stands between the fathers and this author: And we see the pre-eminence given him above all the fathers by the sole and single judgment of one doctor, and that doctor is *himself*: Nay, and (which is more) to put the matter past all comparison between him and them for the future, he tells us, *that the fathers neither knew how to speak their own thoughts of the Trinity, nor indeed so much as to conceive of it aright, by reason of the grossness of their imaginations: Whereas, if they had but conceived of it, and expressed themselves about it, as he has done, all would have been plain, easy, and intelligible.* And as for Gregory Nyssen, (from whom he had quoted more than from all the rest of the fathers together,) he gives him a cast of his temper at last, (p. 119.) and sends him away with this rap over the pate, *that he could not tell what to make of him and his reasonings; for that, in his judgment, he destroyed all principles of individuation.* And in this manner we have him pluming himself, clapping his wings, and crowing over all the fathers; for which, and his quarrelsome, domineering nature together, most think, it is high time, that *his comb were cut.*

Next, let us see what elogies he bestows upon himself for his achievements in the *Socinian* controversy. Concerning which, he tells the men of that persuasion, that after his Vindication of the Trinity, *he believes they will talk more sparingly of absurdities and contradictions for the future.* (p. 153.) But why, I pray? Is it because this author has got the *monopoly* of them? And that therefore the laws will be very severe upon such as invade his property? For, as for any other reason, they have none, that I know of, to *talk more sparingly of absurdities and contradictions*, than they used to do, having so many more, out of his writings, to talk of, than ever they had before. But he proceeds, and closes his work with this triumph over his antagonist, (and in him, I suppose, over all the rest of that tribe, (p. 272.) *that he is pretty confident that he will never be able to reason to any purpose in this cause again.* As for his *confidence*, none doubts of it; but as for his *prediction*, if he proves no better a *prophet* in what he here *foretels* of his *Socinian* opponent, than in what he foretold of that learned person, who answered both his *Case of Allegiance* and his *Vindication of it*, viz. *that if he would but well examine his arguments before he answered them, he should expect to hear no more from him:* And if withal, this *Socinian* be but able to handle him at such a rate, as that close reasoner has done, I dare undertake for him, that he shall go out of the world the most baffled person that ever lived in it. But why (for God's sake) must the *Socinian's* reasoning abilities (which his great lord and patron has given so high, so signal, and so peculiar an *encomium* of*) all of a sudden fail them, upon this author's publication of his book? What can the meaning of this be? Why the meaning of it is this: *Hic vir, hic est*, &c. according to the words by which *Virgil* pointed out *Augustus Cæsar*. *This, this is the man.* This is that incomparable, ir-

* See his four sermons on the Divinity of our Blessed Lord.

refragable divine, who has wrote more convincingly against the *Socinians*, (if you will believe him,) than all, that ever wrote against them before, put together. For notwithstanding all that has been wrote by those great men, who from time to time have appeared in this controversy, the controversy is still alive, and the *Socinians* continue writing and reasoning still: And even by this author's confession, (once at least) *to some purpose*. For otherwise how could he say of his *Socinian* adversary, *that he would never be able to reason to any purpose in this cause again*, if he had never reasoned so at all? But so far are the *Socinians* from being put out of countenance, and much less out of heart, by what this man has wrote against them, that I assure him, they look upon him as an opponent according to their heart's desire; as having played a fairer game into their hands than ever was dealt into them before: So that next to their wishing all the world their *friends*, they wish they may always have such *adversaries*. And therefore if they should resolve to reason against him no more, he will have great cause to thank either their inadvertency for overlooking the great advantage given them, or their good nature for not taking it. For the book called by him *a Vindication of the Trinity*, is certainly like a kind of pot or vessel with handles quite round it; turn it which way you will, you are sure to find something to take hold of it by.

And the truth is, upon a strict, impartial comparing of things together, I cannot see any new advantage that he has got over the *Socinians*, unless it be, that he thinks his *three gods* will be too hard for their *one*. And perhaps it is upon presumption of this, that he discharges that clap of thunder at them in his preface, where he tell us, *that having dipped his pen in the vindication of so glorious a cause, by the grace of God he will never desert it, while he can hold pen in hand*. In which words, methinks I see him ready armed and

mounted, (with his face towards the *west*.) and brandishing his sword aloft, all wreaking with *Socinian* blood, and with the very darts of his eyes looking his poor *forgotten friends* through and through. For, in good earnest, the words sound very terribly to these men; but most terribly of all to the article itself; (which is like to suffer most by his *vindication*: For thus to threaten that he will never leave off vexing it *as long as he can hold pen in hand*, (which, I dare say, will be as long as he can tell money with it,) this, I say again, sounds very dreadfully.

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But after the many extraordinary eulogies he has passed upon himself for his writings, methinks it is something pleasant to see him in his *Continuation of the Defence of Dr. Stillingfleet*, (p. 121.) &c. strutting himself in these words, *I am no archbishop yet*. Which shows what his most early thoughts ran upon, and what *his modesty* would be at from the very first. For otherwise, the purpose of the place, where this comes in, had been fully served by saying, *I for my part am no archbishop, nor expect to be one*. But the addition of that little word, *yet*, was very significant, and shows, that out of the *abundance of his heart his mouth spoke*. For though indeed he presently adds, *And I very much suspect, I never shall be one*, yet those words were put in only *ad frangendam invidiam*, and to qualify the fulsome arrogance of the first expression. Howbeit in that he spoke his mind, in this he fences against an inconvenience; in that we have *an account of his nature*, in this only *a copy of his countenance*. And, I question not, but by this time his pretended suspicion is passed into a contrary expectation, and that the *deanery of Paul's* begins to make him think himself heir apparent to *Canterbury*. And therefore no wonder, if while big with such thoughts, speaking in his apology of *Dr. Wallis* and *himself*, he sets himself before him in these words. *He (viz. the melan-*

choly stander-by) concludes with an heavy charge upon myself and Dr. Wallis. By which, I suppose, he would have Dr. Wallis know his proper place. Though I must tell him, that not only common modesty, but also the common custom of the world, makes wise men, whensoever they mention themselves with others, place themselves last. And so it might have become this author too, especially speaking of himself in conjunction with such an one as Dr. Wallis, who was a person of fame and eminence, while this man was learning his grammar, if ever he was so.

But to pass from his applauding himself, to the other branch of his arrogance, in his scornful undervaluing all such as differ from him, (though yet no more, nor in any other thing, than in what his worship had differed from himself,) we have him (*Preface to his Case of Allegiance*) calling such as in their writings could not fall in with his *last* sentiments about the *new oath, little writers*. Concerning whom, I must tell him, that it is often with *writers*, as it is with *books*; amongst which there are many *little ones*, that exceed the worth, and outlive the reputation of much *greater*. If indeed number of pamphlets makes a great writer, this author is in no danger of being accounted a *little one*. But as there is such a thing as *multum in parvo*, so there is also *parvum in multo*; and he who will digest the trouble of reading this author's writings, will need no other argument to prove it so. But as for those excellent persons, whom he first slights, then *challenges*, and afterwards *flies from*, by never replying upon them, I would have him know, that the world has already passed its judgment both upon them and him too; and therefore I would advise his *haughtiness* for the future, to forbear calling his antagonists *little writers*, till by his answers he has made them so.

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It would be endless to set down all the dirty stuff that has flowed from his *billingsgate pen*. But to re-

peat and bring together so much as we have taken notice of, the reader may be pleased to bear away in his memory such appellations as these, viz. *Epicurean, and ridiculer of Providence, popishly inclined, a slanderer of the government, little writers, fools and heretics, errant fop, trifling scribbler, shamefully ignorant and impudent, fit to be sent to school again, one that understands little else but jests and quibbles, one that cannot understand plain and familiar sense, one that understands neither Greek nor Latin, and the like.*

These are the choise embellishments of his style. But above all, that beloved word, *nonsense*, is always ready at hand with him ; and out it flies at all persons, and upon all occasions. And hardly can he write three or four pages together, but, right or wrong, he throws it in his adversary's face. One would think that he was born with the *word* in his mouth, and that it grew up with him from his infancy, and that in his very cradle he *cried nonsense*, before he could *speak* it.

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I am at length come to a close of that work, which I should much more gladly have been prevented, than engaged in ; by being a *reader*, rather than the *author* of a reply to this man's strange, unjustifiable innovations upon this great article of our religion. But it is now a considerable time that the book, here animadverted upon, has walked about the world, without any public control ; and though in private discourse, generally censured by all, yet (as to the point undertook by me) hitherto answered by none ; which may well be matter of *melancholy consideration* to all hearty lovers of our church and ancient Christianity. Whereas, I dare say, had this heterodox piece been published in a language understood by foreigners, we should long since have had several confutations of it sent us from abroad ; and probably, not without some severe reflections upon the *English* church and clergy, for their silence in a cause, which so loudly called for their de-

fence. To take off this reproach from our church, (in some degree at least,) I have (while others far more able to *defend it*, chuse rather to sit still and *enjoy it*) ventured to set my weak hand to the vindication of a principal article of her faith, against the rude attacks of this bold undertaker. In which, though I freely own, that all, that has been done by me in it, is extremely below the dignity of the subject, yet I am well assured that I have effectually answered this man; and if it should prove otherwise, I must ascribe it to a peculiar misfortune attending me; since none besides has hitherto wrote against him, but has confuted him.

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The truth is, he has carried on an offensive war with most that have wrote; and there are very few, whom he has not, one way or other, struck at and defied. So that the matter being in effect brought to this point, whether he shall be too hard for the world, or the world for him; I hope it will not be long in deciding. He has for a great while, and in a very audacious manner, been preying and privateering upon many a worthy and good name, and as far as he was able, made prize of the reputation of men better than himself: And therefore it is now high time for such to think of repaying the good turns done them, and for the injured world to retaliate upon the lawless aggressor. This is, and has been, the *custom of nations*.

END.

